

Hammer Horror™

MARVEL
MAGAZINES

No.3
MAY

the Films the Facts the Fables from the Studios that Dripped Blood

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A FEAST AT MIDNIGHT

Behind the
scenes on
Christopher
Lee's new film

EDDIE POWELL

Hammer's stunt man

THE CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S SHROUD



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Hammer Horror

The Film That Feels the Fear: The Movies That Dropped Blood



The curse of The Hammer's Shroud stars another victim. Coverage of this issue's featured film begins on page 31.

Recent weeks have seen Christopher Lee's public profile at its highest level in years. Interviews for The Daily Mail, The Daily Express and The Daily Telegraph have complemented several television chat show appearances as part of his publicity tour to promote the launch of the widescreen *Dracula Prince of Darkness*. Of all his recent appearances, perhaps the most illuminating was his presence on Radio 4's *Desert Island Discs*. His chosen recordings all comprised his favourite opera ('it's in the blood') and familiar anecdotes jostled with a few surprises. It was especially encouraging to hear the way he embraced the, perhaps inevitable way Hammer dominated conversation. Unusually for *Desert Island Discs*, Christopher was given the chance to discuss some of his favourite films as well. On the horror genre particularly, he had some very strong opinions: 'The two most frightening films I've seen was one where you saw nothing - *Rosemary's Baby*, a brilliant, terrifying film - and *Alien*, where you did see something that was so unexpected - the alien out of the stomach - that it really did shake me.'

At *Hammer Horror* our budget won't even stretch to an imaginary desert island, but a new feature on page 5 will nevertheless provide a chance to sing the praises of some favourite flicks. Over the coming months we'll be inviting various people to talk about their top ten - the first chart has already caused a few raised eyebrows.

Sadly, in this issue we say goodbye to a man we know Christopher Lee had enormous respect for. Len Harris, Hammer's camera operator for some of their very finest films, recently passed away. I was lucky enough to spend some time with Len earlier this year and, despite his clearly failing health, the enthusiasm that helped make those films so special clearly shone through. He is sadly missed.

Marcus Hearn
editor

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Len Harris 1916-1995

Wayne Kinsey remembers the cameraman who brought a unique touch to some of Hammer's most beautifully photographed films.

I first met veteran camera operator Len Harris at the 1985 Hammer International Film Convention and, if first impressions are anything to go by, he came across immediately as a warm, jovial chap who just loved to talk about his work. The last time I saw him was at Peter Cushing's memorial service on 12th January this year. Despite suffering from the after-effects of his recent stroke, he was still very much alert and I swear I've never seen anyone move so fast as he did when I inadvertently picked up his pint instead of mine in the pub later! On Tuesday 14th February he was rushed into the Middlesex Hospital where, after an emergency operation, his condition deteriorated and he sadly passed away on the evening of Tuesday 21st February.

Len Harris was born in Brondesbury Park, near London, in May 1916 and became Hammer's principal camera operator from Munkin in 1952 to *The Phantom of the Opera* in 1961. He was with the company when they first ploughed into horror with *The Quatermass Experiment* in 1955. Two other science-fiction shockers soon followed in *X the Unknown* in 1956 and *Quatermass 2* in 1957. The first of these became his worst experience at Hammer due to a combination of location shooting in adverse weather conditions and problems with director Leslie Norman. Next came Hammer's breakthrough into colour Gothic horror with *The Curse of Frankenstein* and Len was forever telling his lovely story of how one day he was being driven back from location by Tony Hinds who told him of Hammer's plans to produce a Frankenstein film as a black and white quackie with a three-week shooting schedule! Thankfully things turned out differently. Len's work excelled from the start and the head projectionist at the Warner Theatre commented that *Curse* was one of the sharpest prints they had seen in years.

Len worked on all the other Terence Fisher classics of the golden era; *Dracula*, *The Revenge of Frankenstein*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Man Who Could Cheat Death*, *The Mummy*, *The Two Faces of Dr. Jekyll*, *The Brides of Dracula*, *The Curse of the Werewolf* and his last film under contract to Hammer, *The Phantom of the Opera*. He also worked on the costume adventures, *The Pirates of Blood River* and *Captain Clegg* (coincidentally Len had actually worked on the earlier 1937 Gainsborough version - *Dr. Syn* which starred George Arliss). Len briefly returned to Hammer on two occasions - with the second unit on *The Septile* (1965) and *Quatermass and the Pit* (1967).

A charming, sincere man and a master of his craft, he will always be remembered for his illuminating little stories, many of which he resonated with gratifying regularity. He leaves behind him a legion of friends, many of whom 'adopted' him in his latter years.

Just one example of his genius behind the camera - at the beginning of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, the camera tracks up to a window at

Baskerville Hall and a man suddenly crashes through it into the moat below. This scene was shot in the dark, and when the stunt man was thrown through the window Len was temporarily blinded by the bright lights from within. Despite this he caught the action perfectly first time. This was one of Len's key attributes - he always prided himself that he could follow action scenes very well and not lose the actors. Remember that next time you use your camcorder...

Hammer Network

by Bill Harry

The Prowse Projects



Photo © Star Agency

It's been some years since I was Dave Prowse's press officer - since his *Star Wars* years as Darth Vader in fact. In discussions I'd been having with Caroline Munro and her husband, filmmaker George Dugdale, Dave's name had cropped up. He was considering turning the basement of his North London fitness centre into 'the Hammer Crypt' - an interesting setting for a television series in which Caroline would present themes around the sci-fi and horror genres.

Dave also runs Hammer House of Horror Marketing Ltd with Gary Wilson of renowned model company Creatures Unlimited. The pair hope that their upcoming merchandise will cover everything from computer games to breakfast cereals. The first venture is already in preparation - a series of model kits starting with Oliver Reed in *The Curse of the Werewolf*, Christopher Lee as *Dracula* and Dave as the monster from hell.

Dave's literary agent in America is working on four book projects for him: one his autobiography and three others he is co-writing. They include an anthology on Hammer, a celebrity cookbook and a book on movie trivia. Dave's autobiography will include accounts of the Green Cross Code Man era, his various television rôles and sizable sections about his success with Hammer and the *Star Wars* series.

Cult American film director Russ Meyer (above left), who was in London for a major retrospective of his films at the National Film Theatre, recently met up with Dave. They have been friends ever since Dave appeared in *Slaves* and they usually get together when Meyer visits the capital.



Hammer House of Horror under South Quay, with the late Len Harris at a Hammer International Fan Club Convention. Photo © Keith Dugdale

Horror Publications

For Hammer enthusiasts seeking information on magazines and fanzines which feature photographs or articles about the company, look no further: *Magazines of the Movies*, *Collectors' Guide to Film Magazines* and *Fanzines* is an invaluable source. First published by Ray Stewart in 1989, the fifth issue, covering 1993-4, is now available and contains a cornucopia of information on film magazines from around the world. The main feature profiles the highly collectable British *Monster Mag*. Another feature covers *Modern Monsters*, an American magazine from the sixties. There is also a lengthy article on UK horror fanzines by Glyn Williams while Jon Older has written a fascinating article about Forrest Ackerman's notable *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. Well worth hunting out.

Christopher Lee's Cause Célèbre

Bravo, the satellite television station, will be running a season of Christopher Lee films throughout May which will include some of his most memorable British horror classics. The season coincides with the imminent release of Lumiere Video's classic Hammer Horror, *Rasputin the Mad Monk* as well as Christopher Lee's 73rd birthday on May 27th.

- May 3, 10pm *The Face of Fu Manchu*
- May 4, 10pm *Rasputin the Mad Monk*
- May 10, 10pm *The Brides of Fu Manchu*



- May 11, 10pm *Theatre of Death*
- May 17, 10pm *The Vengeance of Fu Manchu*
- May 18, 10pm *Circus of Fear*
- May 24, 10pm *The Blood of Fu Manchu*
- May 25, 10pm *I, Monster*
- May 31, 10pm *The Castle of Fu Manchu*

My Top Ten

In the first instalment of a new series, we invite Hammer expert and collector **Stephen Jones** to pick his desert island films...



1. *Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell*

This was the first Hammer Frankenstein film I ever saw, and I could write a book about the things that make it my favourite. The main reasons are the entrance of Peter Cushing and, of course, the completely over-the-top brain transplant. This one film hooked me on Hammer and the rest is history.

2. *Dr Jekyll & Sister Hyde*

Probably one of the few Hammer films that succeeded in taking a classic story and turning it on its head. The beginning, where Ralph Bates stalks a young prostitute through the dimly-lit London street, is the highlight of the film.

3. *Dracula AD 1972*

Although disliked by just about everybody, including some Hammer fans, this has the best beginning and ending in any of the Hammer Dracula films, and for that reason alone it is on my list.

4. *Vampire Circus*

This was a great slant on the vampire myth. The thing I like about *Vampire Circus* is the great story and the performance of the young Anthony Corlan as Emil.

5. *Captain Kronos Vampire Hunter*

Even today, Kronos is way ahead of its time - it's basically a comic strip tale which I love.

6. *Quatermass and the Pit*

It was 9.30 on a Monday night - a night before I was due to go to school! I was just about to witness the first film that would scare the life out of me, and for this memory *Quatermass and the Pit* deserves to be on my list.

7. *Taste of Fear*

One of Hammer's mini-Hitchcocks! This film has more twists and turns than the average showground ride. Even if played at a cinema today this film would hold an audience.

8. *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb*

An interesting variation on the mummy story brings this Bram Stoker novel to life. The special effects are good and the acting is top notch but I can't help think of how the film might have been if Peter Cushing hadn't pulled out.

9. *Scars of Dracula*

It took two viewings before I accepted this as a classic. It differs from most other Dracula films in the series as it reverts back to scenes from the original novel. I particularly liked the make-up for Chris Lee.

10. *Cash on Demand*

Not a Hammer horror as such, but with a storyline as strong as this and a cast which complements it you have one great film. I rate this as Peter Cushing's finest performance for Hammer and recommend it to anyone who hasn't seen it yet.

Satanic Writings

Send your letters to:
Satanic Writings,
Hammer Horror,
Marvel Comics Ltd.,
Arundel House,
13/15 Arundel Street,
London WC2R 3DX.

Letters may be edited for reasons
of space and clarity. Full addresses
will only be printed if specially
requested.

I was very impressed with your *Hammer Horror Collectors' Special* – particularly with your illustration on page 28 of one of the original front-of-house stills from *The Phantom of the Opera*. I last saw the still in the display case outside the Esso/ld in Stoke, when I went to see the film there in August 1962.

As many film fans collect front-of-house stills sets, particularly those from Hammer films, may I make the suggestion that in each consecutive issue you publish a set of front-of-house pictures from a different film (there were eight stills in each set supplied by the National Screen Service).

One other comment I would like to make is concerning your remark that "The Phantom of the Opera was a notorious box-office flop." I can only speak for my own area of Stoke-on-Trent, but the double-bill programme of *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Captain Clegg* was well-received here, and waddy shown in many of the cinemas across the area. I have always regarded this programme as much a part of the summer of 1962 as Cliff Richard or Helen Shapiro. *The Phantom of the Opera* is available on video and is part of my collection, but I wish some video company would issue *Captain Clegg*, if only as a tribute to the wonderful Peter Cushing.

David Rayner,
Kenyon,
Stoke-on-Trent

Front-of-house stills rank amongst some of the most highly sought-after Hammer collectibles and tracking them down is no mean feat. Where we have access to them, as we had for *Dracula Prince of Darkness* in issue 2, we'll endeavour to print the full set throughout the magazine. In this issue, however, we opted to predominantly use German and French front-of-house stills to illustrate *The Mummy's Shroud* section simply because we felt they were better quality. Very often, British front-of-house sets from the fifties, sixties and even early seventies were garishly coloured black-and-white photographs which, while holding a certain charm, are sometimes quite painful to look at. Quite why National Screen opted to colour black-and-

white stills in preference to reproducing colour photographs is something of a mystery – legend has it that the photographic laboratories at Elstree simply couldn't process colour stills. Does anyone know any better?

On page 25 of the *Hammer Horror Collectors' Special* it says "The composer of *The Two Faces* [of Dr. Jekyll], Monty Norman, is similarly best known for his Bond contribution – the score of Dr. No. He's usually credited with writing the famous 007 'dang-diddle-dang-dang' theme; John Barry's in point of fact."

Monty Norman is usually credited for writing the James Bond theme because he wrote it and John Barry only orchestrated it. The arrangement used in the film was played by the John Barry Seven, although the arrangement heard in the film's trailer was Monty Norman's. For the rest of the film's music Monty Norman's score was orchestrated by TV theme composer Burt Rhodes and conducted by Carry On composer Eric Rogers.

In 1961, Monty Norman wrote the music and lyrics for a West End musical called *Belle*, which was co-written by Wolf Mankowitz who wrote the screenplay for *The Two Faces of Dr. Jekyll*.

Nan W Dower,
Clacks,
Sewland

When compiling the original feature on *The Two Faces of Dr. Jekyll* last year, we trusted our original reference sources, but are glad the record has now been set straight.

Last year I picked up a copy of the *Hammer Horror Collectors' Special*, which I greatly enjoyed. At first glance I wondered what a magazine devoted to Hammer films could offer me because I thought I knew a fair deal about them. Way back in the seventies I bought the *House of Hammer* magazine and thought that would be the last word on the subject.

To be perfectly honest the only Hammer film I saw at the cinema was *To the Devil... a Daughter*. Back then I didn't have much respect for Hammer films, preferring the old Universal classics which were getting shown on television. However, as time went by I slowly got bored with the likes of Karloff, Lugosi and Chaney Jr. and, looking for better things to watch in the horror genre, I discovered the Hammer films I'd passed by in my younger days.

The first issue of *Hammer Horror* was very promising, although I must admit that *Gothic* was a film I watched over Christmas and couldn't make sense of at all.

Howard T Peil,
Kogley,
West Yorkshire

After the magnificent *Collectors' Special*, I wondered (with some anxiety) how you would develop a monthly magazine.

However, I found your first issue thoroughly entertaining. It was well-researched, with all the facts and opinions laid out in a lively tone. I was also glad to see that *Hammer Horror* indulges in the same luxurious colour and opulence as its subject matter.

Only two things I'd like to quibble over: the choice of *Gothic* for an appraisal (surely *Blood of the Vampire*, *The Trollenberg Terror* or *Murder by Decree* would have been more appropriate choices), and also remarks by both Hesel Court and Robert Urquhart as to the state of the modern horror genre. I find it ironic that these intelligent actors did not see that their views were mirrored by the press's response to *The Curse of Frankenstein* some forty-odd



years earlier!

Nevertheless, Hammer Horror is an amazing mag, and I wish you great success with it in the future.

**Mike Paines,
Southco,
Hants**

As a British horror film, we felt that Gothic was fair game to cover in the magazine – the Mary Shelley link made it ideal to pair with Hammer's *The Curse of Frankenstein*. *Blood of the Vampire*, *The Trollenberg Terror* and *Murder by Decree* are also important films with admittedly more direct links to Hammer. We'll be looking at them all in due course.

Why oh why do some of the people who decide on bringing Hammer films out on video not take due care as to their quality or contents? Too often we get edited American prints instead of the unblemished British originals. After all, these films were British in the first place.

For example, the last time *The Plague of the Zombies* was released the tape featured the American version with the re-arranged prologue and titles. For me it lost a lot of its original effect.

Please take stock and show these films as they were meant to be seen.

**Nan Hamilton,
Glasgow,
Scotland**

Censorship is something we've touched upon in Issue 2, and will look at in greater depth when we cover *The Curse of the Werewolf* in Issue 6, on sale in July. In the meantime, we can but hope that issuing such originals (such as the BBC's superb print of *Taste the Blood of Dracula*) will become more important to video distributors.

Congratulations on the excellent Hammer Horror. It is, without doubt, one of the finest magazines of its type to emerge for many years. Everything from the writing to the superb graphic layout of the pages are first-rate.

• The groundbreaking depth of the research was extraordinary and I'm sure it will be a great success with collectors and enthusiasts alike. I personally much enjoyed seeing the multitude of black-and-white and colour stills, many for the first time.

The one noticeable omission, however, is a page listing some possible accompanying merchandise, such as posters and calendars, a tee-shirt or a mug. Fans and collectors can of course pick up ropey, unlicensed, badly laser-copied items at various movie fairs, but it's not quite the same as having a crisp, first generation and fully authorised poster or set of photographs featuring some of Hammer's finest moments.

I appreciate it is still early days, but I hope there will soon be such items for sale – I'm sure there could be a very lucrative market, both here and in the US alike.

In the meantime, thanks again for providing such a fine publication and may I wish you and the magazine continued success.

**Ian Price,
Warrminster,
Wiltshire**

It is early days for other Hammer merchandise, but various plans are afoot which will hopefully see fruition later in the year. One of the most exciting of these forthcoming products will be Hammer House of Horror *Marketing's werewolf kit*, as seen in Issue 2. More news on this later in the year.

As you seem to have the backing and blessing of Roy Skelton, I look forward with anticipation to in-depth reports on Hammer classics of the past, and hopefully exclusive news and photographs from the new generation of films from the company.

In addition to the classic horror films, I also hope to see further coverage of Hammer's adaptation of the Quatermass serials. I have long been a fan of Nigel Kneale's most famous creation, and I hope my own collection of memorabilia will be enhanced through your pages. Possibly an interview with Mr Kneale himself could be arranged? Much of his work has gone unused for many years, such as his seventies serial *Beasts*, and a detailed interview with one of the greats of British horror and science-fiction would be most welcome.

Through the pages of your magazine, you have an ideal opportunity to chronicle the history of Hammer in the most complete and detailed way yet presented, and I wish you every success for the future.

**David Phillips,
Edin Vale,
Gwent**

August this year sees the fortieth anniversary of *The Quatermass Experiment's* original release. We'll be marking the event by documenting the film's production and talking to director Val Guest in Issue 7, on sale in August.

I very much enjoyed and appreciated your Hammer Collectors' Special issue as well as the first issue of *Hammer Horror*.

In response to your invitation for opinions and suggestions for future articles, how about a feature on Valerie Leon, star of *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb* (1971), as well as various other roles in British films and television productions in the late sixties and early seventies? I vaguely recall that the lady herself married in the mid-seventies, and possibly also retired at the same time as I cannot remember seeing her appear on the screen since. I am sure that others may be interested to know of any subsequent developments.

With every good wish for your continued success of your publication and for the long awaited revival of Hammer films!

**Tony Bewick,
Berkeley,
Birmingham**

Good news for Hammer glamour enthusiasts.

In addition to our regular monthly issues, we'll be publishing two further Collectors' Specials this year. *Collectors' Special #2*, on sale in July, will be entirely devoted to Hammer's most glamorous leading ladies and will feature a brief biography of Valerie Leon.

Firstly I'd just like to say a big 'thanks'. Your magazine is just what I and other horror fans needed to sink our teeth into. I love all horror

films but you just can't beat the old classics and I'm sure that Peter Cushing is missed by horror fans worldwide.

I would be grateful if you could print my address for anyone willing to correspond with me.

Keep up the good work and well done.

**Louise Stanley,
115 Cow Lane,
Haverhill,
West Yorkshire,
WF4 2HN**

While we endeavour to interview as many people as possible from the films we concentrate on each month, sometimes our efforts are in vain. However, shortly before we went to press we received the following note...

Thank you for your letter, which has been forwarded to me in France where I spend quite a lot of time. Goodness – what a long time ago it was – *Cloudburst* – it must have been in the fifties.



**Elizabeth Sellars
in 1954's
*Cloudburst***

What I remember most about the film was being thrilled at the chance of playing opposite Robert Preston – an actor whose films I had long admired. Then there was the excitement of a completely new studio being developed from an ancient house and all the dramas we experienced with noise, which was difficult to control. Under the circumstances I think the crew and company did wonderfully well and against all odds and went on to develop a really fine studio.

I don't remember much of the last film, *The Mummy's Shroud*. I have the feeling I was playing in the theatre at the same time but I don't have the records here. I do remember dear Francis Searle being very supportive [on *Cloudburst*] – especially when I was run over in the pouring rain!

They were happy days, remembered with pleasure – and they were pioneering days for the small studios.

Elizabeth Sellars



A Feast at Midnight

Christopher Lee's latest film sees him give one of the very finest performances of his career. Alan Barnes talks to producer Yoshi Nishio and director Justin Hardy about Mr Lee, the trials and tribulations of independent film-making and a distinguished family tradition...



Photo © Peter Zarant

The Menu

Writer
Headmaster
Chef
Miss Plunder
Miss Charlotte
Father
Magus
Baroness
Cool
Tava

Director
Producers
Original Screenplay
Director Of Photography
Production Designer
Production Manager
Editor
Music
Executive Producers
Line Producer

Christopher Lee
Robert Hardy
Samuel West
Coral Marreedy
Lisa Faulster
Edward Fox
Freddie Findley
Stuart Hawley
Aled Roberts
Andrew Lasher

Justin Hardy
Toshi Nishio
Justin Hardy & Toshi Nishio
Tim Maurer-Jones
Christiane Zwarg
Perry Gibbs
Michael Johns GBE
David A Hughes & John Murphy
Jonathan Green & Alan O'Brien
Jonathan Herrick

Taster

Let's get this straight from the start: the soon-to-be-released *A Feast of Midnight* is not a horror movie. A British-made comedy-drama, it tells the story of ten-year-old Magnus Gove's escapades in an all-boys boarding school. In a bid to exercise a palate dulled by a puritanically healthy menu, he sets up an illicit feasting society - *The Scoffins* - and in doing so, incurs the wrath of the fearsome Latin master, Victor E Longfellow; better known as Raptor (VE L-oci-Raptor, after the dinosaur).

"We wanted the school to be the scariest school in the world, and we wanted the Latin master to be the scariest master in the world, and we couldn't think of anything more scary than having the Latin master played by Dracula," says the film's agreeable, impassionate director and co-writer Justin Hardy. Thus Christopher Lee was cast as Raptor, giving a towering performance that numbers among his very best. "I think it's one of the most enchanting films I've ever been in," said Lee in *The Guardian* interview that followed the film's initial screening at November's London Film Festival. "It's a magical picture. I loved it..."

Starter

Flashback to Los Angeles, October 1993, where Oxford graduate Justin - an award-winning writer/director of film shorts - re-acquainted himself with his old college friend, Yoshi Nishida, who'd recently graduated from the prestigious UCLA Independent Producers' Program with a short film, *Wild Oats*. Deciding that they were "in the wrong place to make movies", the two ex-pats elected to return to Britain, determined to found a film production company under the terms of what they perceived as the under-used Business Expansion Scheme. The deadline for acceptance into the BES was 31st December of that year. So, according to Justin, "we rushed over here with an idea to make a film set in a prep school. We wrote a story to be set in one location, with amateur child actors, the concept being that that was the only way we could think of making a film cheaply enough that we could keep it all contained."

The script, then entitled *Small Boys*, was written by the pair over five weeks while rushing to-and-fro across the land, attempting to pull the practicalities of the proposed film together. Explains producer Yoshi, "Generally, in the business, we have this yardstick that a feature film script is 120 pages long, so we literally divided the number of pages that had to be written by the number of days we had and worked out that we had to write five pages per day. And so, if we were on a motorway going to visit a school, to look for the location, or to find some kids, or on the way to go and see one of the actors, or on our way to see an investor about a possible investment, whatever, the laptop computer went with us, and we just carried on writing - whether it was in a car on a motorway or in a tube, in a train, over lunch, in a pub, we just kept ourselves disciplined into doing five pages a day. Sometimes five pages would take us three hours, other times it would take us most of the day and night. But only by keeping that discipline were we able to finish the script on time, enabling us to then raise the money and go on from there."

Slowly, the component parts of the film began to fall into place. An eclectic and distinguished cast was assembled, led by Robert Hardy (no relation to the director) and the incomparable Mr Lee. "We went to see Christopher, and told him that there was basically no money in it, and he was reminded of twenty years before when my father [Robin] had gone to him and said, 'We want you to be in a little film called *The Wicker Man*, and there's no money in it.' Two generations of

Hardys he's worked for for nothing..." says Justin. The pair would offer villain Raptor an opportunity to redeem himself before the closing credits - "I think that's part of the reason why he was keen to take it," elaborates Justin. "I think that anti-heroes are always more interesting if you discover why it is that they are evil and allow them, at the end, to find redemption. The best film example that I can think of for that is *Roger Hauer* in *Blade Runner*, who is an ultimately evil machine, but who at the end reveals why that is; he's just afraid of it. We wanted to give Christopher something to get his teeth into." He grimaces at the knowing pun. "Boom, boom."

Cinema veteran Edward Fox would be persuaded to make a brief cameo at the film's climax: rising young stars Sam West (Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, *Howards End*) and Lisa Faulkner (*The Lover*, and latterly *Dangerfield*) took other leading parts.

With Lee's name now firmly attached to the project, and a strong storyline taking shape, Yoshi and Justin could now begin to search for private investors to back the film. Many were found in one go. Justin:

"We went to investment banks in the City on the day after they received their record 1993 bonuses, and we went onto the trading floors, and we stood up and told the story in public, and the traders came up and said, 'Okay, we're interested in doing some casino money on this,' and we said, 'We don't really want the casino money, we'll take it, but if you can give us some proper money, then we will make sure that the boys in the film are named after you.' And sure enough, every single one went for the proper amount of money in order to have their names immortalised in the film. So when Christopher Lee stands there in the scene in which he hurls back the Thursday tests to them, each one of those names that's quoted is the name of a particularly generous investor."

The company formed to bank the cheques was named Kwai River Productions PLC, in a conscious nod towards the David Lean film, suggesting bridges being built between East and West - although they're at pains to point out that no Japanese money was involved in *A Feast of Midnight* itself - and the last of the cheques was indeed banked on the last day of 1993, qualifying them for the BES. They'd successfully achieved their immediate aim; now they had to actually go out and get their film made.

Putting together the crew and arranging to pay them for their efforts was a comparatively straightforward affair. There were no royalties promised, just a flat, down-the-line £200 per week for the duration of the shoot. "We paid everybody a socialist wage. From Yoshi and myself to the runners, everyone was paid the same, and it was enough to enable everybody to come and live with us for the six weeks of shooting, and not get behind in their rent or their mortgage, but it certainly wasn't going to make them rich. We didn't go via the traditional routes of financing because we didn't really

"I think that anti-heroes are always more interesting if you discover why it is that they are evil and allow them, at the end, to find redemption."



Edward Woodward and Christopher Lee in 1993's *The Wicker Man*. The cult classic marked the debut of director Robin Hardy, Justin's father.

believe that they would give it to us. Everybody was prepared to work on the film for the benefit that the film would bring them and – dare I say it, cheekily? – for the honour of being in a well-made film. And that was the only thing we could promise them . . .”

The Main Course

After viewing some 50 prep schools as prospective locations, the film was eventually shot in and around Hawtreys, the since defunct public school near Marlborough, Wiltshire, its five-week schedule (constrained by the Easter holidays) encompassing late March and early May of last year. Minor miracles were worked by production designer Christiane

Ewing, who oversaw the conversion of the dining hall to Jurassic Park-style kitchens, and the gym's becoming a dormitory. The real dormitories, meanwhile, were occupied by schoolboys-turned-actors and crew. Justin was unfazed by the challenge of directing ten-year-old juveniles with absolutely no previous acting experience. “The 50 boys were actually much easier than you’d expect them to be,” he says. “Because they’re prep school boys, they’re very disciplined, and responded very well to directing. I literally herded them through the script. But also they’re so much brighter than you’d expect them to be. They really understood the story, they really understood how to play it – it wasn’t as if I was asking them to play Hamlet, I was asking them to play themselves.”

Cherubic star Freddie Findlay steals the show as Magnus, who they describe as having “the energy of 50 Tasmanian devils, and a natural talent in abundance that won the hearts of all who worked with him.” However, young Stuart Hawley, playing surly bully Bathurst, encountered problems realising his portrayal. “He’s not at all a cruel boy; it was quite hard for him to see himself as the baddie, so I had to keep on telling him that, in fact, he was the hero of the school, and at the end of the film he remains the hero because

little Magnus is expelled. But it was very hard that final day in which we had to have food thrown at him, and I had to shoot that in twenty different ways, so all day he had food thrown into his face, and I think he became quite distressed by that. What was very sweet was that it was Christopher who took the little boy away when he started to cry, and explained to him that for 230 odd films Christopher had had stakes rammed into his heart and had had – basically – people hurling food at him, and that, ultimately, is the role that the baddie has to play.

“When it came to the end of the film, we had a little ceremony for all the boys that had been in it, and all the crew stood in the main hall of the school, holding candles, in two columns, and one-by-one the boys were led into the room and walked down the column of the crew, who applauded them, and they were given gifts. Then Christopher made a speech, in which he told all the boys that they

had had an experience that would serve them for the rest of their lives, but he recommended that none of them should actually decide to go into acting as a full-time career, because it’s a thankless task. However, he said, ‘If you do decide to go into it, then I can only offer you my best wishes.’ And then he said, ‘I’ve got a present, a gift for one particular little boy, who I was talking to on the day that food was being thrown at him, and he told me what his life ambition was,

and it wasn’t to be an actor; it was to go into the SAS. I therefore hand over, as a gift from one baddie to another . . .’ and produced his own SAS tie, from the time he’d been in the SAS during the War. And this little boy just burst into tears, and we all burst into tears. It was such an extraordinary gift. I’ll never forget that.”

After

Kwai River’s next hurdle was to secure a distribution deal; a task, explains Yoshia, which they pulled off with characteristic aplomb. “Generally, a film is financed by a distributor so that they have product to put through their pipeline, so distribution is usually set





A Feast at Midnight arrives in May. © Nick Gurney

before you've even begun. We didn't have any of that, because we had private investors and when we got to the end of the shoot, we sat down and thought about who we would like to have distribute it." They studied the previous campaigns and track records of various companies. "We thought that Entertainment Films would be the best people for it, so we just rang them up, said 'We've made this film, we'd like you to distribute it, and we'd like to show it to you exclusively now, before anyone else has a chance. And let's see if we can make a deal'."

"They came to see the rough cut, which was about half-an-hour longer than the final film, had no music, had sound which hadn't been re-recorded. It was a very nervous screening, but they came, said 'Thank you very much,' and left, without saying any more than that – and we had an agreement the next day."

With post-production complete, overseen by the film's indefatigable production manager Perry Gibbs, the finished picture was ready to receive a preview as one of the star attractions of the annual London Film Festival: quite an event for the pair. Says Yoshi, "There is no feeling that beats the one when you're actually in the auditorium . . . and there are

six-hundred people there, focusing on and enjoying what's effectively been your life for the last year." And Justin: "It was an extraordinary feeling to have a packed cinema at the Odeon in Leicester Square which applauded three times within the film. Frankly, I think it's a moment that film makers get quite rarely in their careers."

Some of the biggest cheers of the night were reserved for the little directional references to other films: *Oliver!* and in one unforgettable moment, the aforementioned *Jurassic Park*. Justin was pleased by the response. "We had always intended to try and make this archaic school system very contemporary. The *Jurassic Park* references were an attempt to make it all very contemporary, that this crusty old dinosaur of a Latin master was seen in a very, very contemporary frame. We just knew that enough people would have seen *Jurassic Park* that we would be able to just hint at it and, sure enough, in the LFF audience, as soon as he comes to the porthole in the kitchen door and out pours the smoke from his mouth, you get

this ripple of appreciation. Homages like that made the film more fun for us to make. And presumably, if it's more fun for us to make it'll be more fun for people to watch."

Coffee and Cigars

The accolades awarded the film-makers come not only from delighted audiences, but also from their industry peers. Quietly, Justin describes his father Robin's feelings upon watching the film.

"He's proud, impressed, a little envious – as I've been of him for many years – and I think he feels that the recommendation that he made to Christopher, all those months before, was justifiable . . . When Christopher saw the film, there were tears in his eyes. [He] is genuinely moved by the film. I think God knows, Christopher is a cult figure who has been under-used for many years, and I personally think that he will be up for a BAFTA nomination for his

rôle in this film. I think it's absolutely the right time for someone like him to reappear, as far as the public's concerned, in a film in which, as a veteran of the film industry, he's supporting young British films with young, amateur actors, giving one of the performances of his life. I think that the public and the critics will reward that as a good time to hail him for having made more films than anyone else alive in the

world, and for his massive contribution to the British film industry."

So, what does the future hold for *Kwai River*? Justin: "We intend to carry on making modest-budgeted films, which will be set in Britain and which will hopefully have international appeal. *Conjugal* is the next thing on our books at the moment, which is a ghost story set in Edinburgh, and . . ." There follows a long, lingering pause, laden with expectation, "in which there is a considerable rôle for Christopher Lee."

Cause for celebration, we think.

A Feast at Midnight goes on general release from May. †

"Christopher is a cult figure who has been under-used for many years, and I personally think that he will be up for a BAFTA nomination for his rôle in this film."

actually giving birth with no baby inside. The scenes were filmed verité in a real operating-theatre, with real doctors present. "They were treating me as if I were actually giving birth," remembers Gordon, "so they kept yelling at me and throwing the oxygen mask around. I felt like I had given birth to an elephant..."

Here Comes the Mirror Man

Screenplay: Stephen Gallagher
Director: Lawrence Gordon Clark
Stars: Phyllis Logan, John Shires, Paul Reynolds.

"I think waking up in the morning and looking in the mirror but not recognising who you are is much more frightening than seeing someone else," says Stephen Gallagher. His script concerns Gary Kingsdon, a schizophrenic who inhabits an abandoned church,

prone to visits from his murderous - maybe imaginary - friend, Michael. Paul Reynolds (Press Gang. Let Him Have It) revelled in his rôle as Gary's demonic alter-ego:

"I loved wearing all his dark clothes, looking quite dark and moody disappearing into shadows and out again... I liked filming in the church, as you could feel the history of the place. You wondered what had gone on before through the ages." Two churches were used in the production: the exteriors were in Leeds; the interiors, a deconsecrated derelict in Halifax. The bell-tower, however, had to be specially constructed. As did the crypt. Director Lawrence Gordon Clark wanted to keep everyone guessing throughout this segment. "It's almost the feel of *Don't Look Now*... This could be just a story of psychological disturbance, but we want viewers to constantly wonder what the characters they are following are really doing. There is that constant note of doubt."



The Man Who Didn't Believe in Ghosts

Screenplay: Anthony Horowitz
Director: Bob Walker
Stars: Peter Egan, Mel Martin, Miles Anderson.

"My stomach churned," grimaces Mel Martin, recalling the scene where she finds a huge turkey festering with noxious maggots. This wasn't the only peril the indefatigable actress had to face in bringing to life Anthony Horowitz's heroine, Sophie Cramer. The electric chandelier plunges down when I am in the bath. I knew it was rigged and I trusted the production team but before it hit the water I think there was real fear in my eyes." Horowitz's haunted house was at Naburn, near

York. "A nice family moves into a nice house, horrible things take place, then the whole concept is turned on its head. And then there's another twist," explains the writer. "I set out to put together everyday occurrences that had what could be argued was supernatural evidence. For example, noises suggest the house is haunted, then we see the writhing mass of maggots on the meat at a dinner party. Even something like a computer breaking down can be taken as evil in the right context."



Number Six

Screenplay: Anthony Horowitz
Director: Rob Walker
Stars: Kevin McNally, Maggie O'Neill, Dee Harrington.

Northern hamlet Helsby is the setting for Horowitz's second Chiller, where five children have fallen victim to serial killings seemingly linked to Celtic mythology. Director Rob Walker had to work closely with child actors when shooting:

"That was interesting, because I had to create this school with a gang of children who are supernatural and terrorising a little kid. In just that sense it was like real life, an everyday bullying. But you also had that supernatural dimension, with children hell bent on evil." Playing local pld. DI Jack Taylor, Kevin McNally also had to work closely with the kids: "They were terrifying, both in their acting and their lunchtime behaviour. I think children and horror go together quite well... I just dealt with them like I do my own children and they responded well." Silsden, a village near Skipton, doubled as Helsby. The whole village turned out to view the proceedings, especially during the night shoots, but the school in the programme was actually a closed Victorian institution in Leeds. "What is interesting is that it is the close nature of the community that spreads this story," remarks Lorraine Ashbourne, playing Susan Taylor. "When a crisis happens, such small towns and villages can become hysterical..."



A DOUBLE LIFE



Some of the most spectacular scenes in Hammer's films were the handiwork of **Eddie Powell**. The veteran stunt co-ordinator talks to **Alan Barnes** about a career as a stuntman, actor and double for Christopher Lee...



Photo © Adam Johnson/VE

you go along, then you're picked out to do certain things on the action side. Gradually, you build up. You watch other stuntmen doing things, learn from what they do, they learn from what you do. Now, it's changed. You've got a lot of young fellows in the business. They have to complete quite hard qualifications which can take years to get. That's a much better start. They've learned a hell of a lot from the old boys."

He began his long-term association with Hammer as a result of a water-borne sequence he'd performed while working on a film provisionally entitled *The Death of Uncle George*. "There was a make-up guy there, a lovely fellow, Roy Ashton, who said, 'You'd make a marvellous double for Christopher Lee.' I said, 'Who's Christopher Lee?' " Later, at a Hammer pre-production meeting, Eddie's name came up at Ashton's suggestion, beginning a regular series of engagements as Lee's double that spanned well over two decades until 1982's *Howling II - Your Sister is a Werewolf*, shot in Czechoslovakia. He has no memory of their first meeting, but they keep in touch to this day. Infamously, Eddie naked drowning when doubling the vampire's watery demise in the 1965 *Dracula Prince of Darkness*. In his own words, Eddie describes the incident: "That lake ice was very thick with scaffolding holding it up and of course they've got water underneath. The water comes right up to the underside of the fake ice. I knew I was going to have to go down and the thing was going to have to close like a lid behind me, so I had to have air. There was no gap - the water came right up - so I had an air cylinder down there, and a mouthpiece, so that I could swim down to it once I'd gone under and get air. When it came for 'Action!', this thing closed behind me... and of course it's pitch black. I can't see a bloody thing! You can go into panic - there's all this scaffolding all over the place and I'm stuck underneath there, feeling those damn supports. I eventually found the mouthpiece - by now I'm running out of air quite

For a man who's been thumped, whacked, set alight, shot, exterminated, stabbed, staked, drowned, run over - not to mention falling to his doom more times than he can possibly remember - Eddie Powell seems surprisingly chipper. "I've always enjoyed the business," grins the lefty stunt artiste extraordinaire, looking far younger and fitter than his forty-seven-odd years in the action trade might suggest. "I've had my breaks. Shoulders, slipped discs..."

Born in London in 1917, a life of derring-do beckoned when he volunteered for the Grenadier Guards in 1944, serving in Germany. Fancying himself as a despatch rider - "I'd never actually ridden a motorbike in my life before, but I thought it would be a good way of seeing a bit of Germany while I was out there," - he talked his way into a commission with only a smattering of technical knowledge and a short prior demonstration of the absolute basics. "I went to the despatch sheds... and the corporal in charge of the bikes said, 'You're joining us, are you? Take that bike, there.' So I switched on the petrol, flooded the carburettor, put the clutch in, put it in gear and off I went... then lost all control and went straight into a petrol pump, ended up on the ground. I'd only got a bout forty feet, I suppose! The corporal came across and said, 'You can't ride, can you?' I said, 'no,' and he said, 'Come along then. I'll show you,' and it went from there..."

Demobbed, Eddie returned to England in 1948. "I really wasn't trained to do anything at all," he asserts. "My brother Joe was already running Jack Easton's Stunt Agency and I joined up with him. They had an office at Silver Place, in Soho. In those days you did a few stunts, a bit of crowd work - stuntmen weren't really recognised as such." Although Eddie can't precisely recall his first film appearance - "God! You want me to go back a thousand years!" - he does have memories of an early job, working on a picture set in Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors. "I had to scramble around, people jumping on me... there were only about ten so-called stuntmen in those days. There wasn't all that much to do. You pick up things as



Left: Powell (Eddie Powell) takes his revenge on Sir Basil (Nigel Moxley) in *The Mummy's Shroud*. Right: Eddie doubling for Christopher Lee's Count Dracula



Christopher Lee arrives at a watery grave at the climax of *Dracula Prince of Darkness*... his stunt-double Eddie Powell took over for the final descent.

fast. Then I heard thundering steps on top of this 'ice' . . . " Eddie was soon pulled to safety. "You do stunts and you think you've thought of everything. I hadn't thought of complete darkness when the lid closed."

Subsequently, Eddie doubled as Dracula on no fewer than six occasions — four with Lee. "I was always doing falls and things with Chris. Stakes going in, what-have-you . . . carrying actresses wherever. Quite nice, actually!" In 1973, he was called upon to stand in for Jack Palance's portrayal in Din Cui's TV movie *Dracula*. Shot in the former Yugoslavia, he also had a small acting rôle. "I had to play a servant, with a bit of dialogue and I end up with Jack Palance actually killing me." Afterwards, he said, "This is ridiculous. Here I am, playing Dracula killing Dracula . . ." And in 1979, he worked with Frank Langella on John Badham's version. Another classic movie monster he's played is, of

course, the Mummy; firstly, doubling for Lee in the famous scene at the climax of Hammer's 1959 *The Mummy*, where it was a heavily bandaged Eddie who submerged himself beneath the murky waters of a fetid swamp. "Funnily enough, they thought that was going to take a hell of a long time to do. I did it all in one take and Michael Carreras said, 'Whatever money you're paying him, double it!' I'd saved them so much time when they could be shooting other things, so it worked out very well." The scene would prove to be a dress rehearsal for his biggest acting credit for the company, as Prem, the mortified monstrosity in 1967's *The Mummy's Shroud*; a rôle he apparently took only after Lee had previously turned it down. "I think the reason why he wouldn't do it was because there was no dialogue. Generally, I do a flip because there is no dialogue! I hate dialogue. I've had it at times. I hate it! Other than that, I can't remember an awful lot about it. . . The design of that costume was copied from a museum, so all the markings were very authentic. The mask was open at the back and every time they put it back on they had to glue it back down again. There was one point where I had acid, or something, thrown at me in the chest." Indeed, in the sequence where the Mummy lumbers toward photographer Harry, murder in mind. "I don't know what it was they actually threw at me, but it was a bit diabolical, I must say. The fumes literally went up in my mask. I thought I was going to die. I couldn't breathe. It must have stopped me breathing. I was ripping the mask off. I just rushed straight off the set, knocking people out of the way to get outside. I was gasping. That was murder. Other than that, no problem!"

The Mummy's Shroud was the last film to be shot at Hammer's original base. "Bray Studios itself was a beautiful studio because it was more like a happy family there. They always had the same carpenters, plasterers . . . every time you went down there, you just knew everybody."

Eddie had married Hammer's wardrobe mistress, Rosemary Burrows, earlier that year. "She'll never be interviewed. She hates anything to do with interviews. Can't say I like them either, to tell you the truth!" he laughs. "She didn't like to watch me doing things. She said that she'd married me



"They had the idea of doing a commercial," says Eddie. "I never actually saw it. . . I don't know if they ever used it."





the whole thing up. So I've had to make up a headpiece with eyeglasses smothered in petroleum jelly." Eddie could only breathe through a tube that ran under his protective mask, along his body, through his trousers, and down to the floor. He was reading himself to perform the stunt when he began to feel faint. "What I didn't realise was that I'm blowing out hard through this tube, but I'm not blowing out far enough to get fresh air back in, so I'm actually not getting any oxygen. At the same time, they've said, 'Action!' They lit me, so off I go, not feeling pain anyone – I'm in now! I terror! I get burning sand the eyes immediately, so I know something's wrong there. I managed to get to where I had to get, which was the end of the church and collapsed in front of the camera. They put me out, and I told them to get my mask off quickly." The flesh around his eye-sockets was burnt, the rims of the eyeglasses had become red-hot immediately. There was a victim standing there, and he said, "Now you know what it's like in Hell!" remembers Eddie, chortling. He's become quite well-known in the trade for his fire work; how does it actually feel, to be set alight? "You feel nothing at first. The heat builds up. You can feel it coming through ... you've got to be very careful, because at a certain point it starts coming through like a

knowing what the job was, so that was it. She fretted a bit, same as I did, when I was doubling Clint Eastwood for *Where Eagles Dare*.¹ Unsurprisingly perhaps. Alongside action veteran Al Joint, Eddie hunched a lift on top of a cable car – without safety belts – a perilous 2,000 feet high up in the mountains near Ebensee, Austria. “It was freezing cold. We had to climb outside and sit astride the wheels. Quite an eerie feeling, really. All you could hear was the wheels going round, cracking the ice on the cables as it was going up.”

Hammer kept him in plenty of work. Playing one of Ayeshah's entourage in *She*, Eddie was required to clock John Richardson's Leo a knoockout thump in a darkened Palestinian street – which he nearly did for real, given a fake cosh with which to deliver the blow. "It was a rubber thing, but you can get a whack out of it. Bang! A very good reaction ..." he remembers, chuckling. He was the horned beast in *The Devil Riders* Out and featured in another Dennis Wheatley adaptation, 1968's *The Lost Continent*. "Oh yes. I played 'the Inquisitor'. I was in absolute terror. I was absolutely petrified on that, and not because of the stunt I had to do ..."

Again, recalls his life, Christopher Lee had been in the frame for the part, but dropped out. "... and I'm the next best thing, aren't I? They phoned up said, 'Is there any dialogue?' They said, 'No,' I said, 'Alright, I'll do it.' Shooting duly commenced. 'Suddenly, Michael Caine comes across to me and says, 'I've got a few pages of dialogue here for you.' I said, 'no, no, no,' and I start walking out of the set. 'Look,' I said, 'I hate dialogue. I'm going to balls the whole thing up. My mind goes blank on dialogue.' He said, 'Well, we'll only do a little bit at a time.' So I've gone into sheer panic. I've called my wife, got her to come and see me at the studio, and she helped me rehearse my lines. Oh, those last few days," he sighs. "I think that's when my hair fell out. I managed to do it all, and then the last page-and-a-half was a prayer. 'I'm on my knees, on fire.' At the same time I'm, 'on my knees, on fire.' 'cos I'm on my knees ..."

Fire also featured in his last job for Hammer, doubling Anthony Valentine's tele-combustive, brimstone-fuelled exit in *To The Devil . . . a Daughter*. "With that one, the director [Peter Sykes] wanted an all-over fire job; most fire jobs are only on the back. He wanted a front and back and this was on a 'hurry-up'. That's the trouble with a lot of stunts. They're going, 'Come on, come on,' and you haven't really got time to set



blowtorch. You've only got to leave it two or three seconds longer and you're in trouble."

He's kept busy in the horror/sci-fi/fantasy genres, most notably – albeit anonymously – as the eponymous nasty of Ridley Scott's 1979 classic, *Alien*. "I played the alien, as such. I didn't double the alien. I was called

in to take over the rôle from someone else. When I saw the film, I was furious because I only got a credit much further down [among the stunt performers]. But I literally played the part, right the way through. Choked I was, absolutely choked."

**YOU KNOW
e in Hell!"** There are plenty of others; doubling Gregory Peck as he regularly did on *The O.C.*; as one of Ming's brutes in *Flash Gordon*; a heavy in *The Prisoner* episode, *Hammer into Arco*; *Butman*, *Krull*, *Legend*, *The Keep*. ... Eddie also performed a particularly spectacular fall playing the character of Thompson in the second of the two sires' *Doc*ie Who films, *Daleks' Invasion Earth 2150 A.D.*, starring Peter Cushing. "That was great fun. I broke my ankle on that. If you watch the film, I do a little bit of dialogue and then run up the face of this building. I had these joists sticking out in front of the building at floor level. The idea was that I run along them and as the Daleks fire,

Dulick's invasion
Earth 2150 AD.
Eddie, in the top
right of the
picture, preserves
the fall which
would lead to his
hospitalization



one of them breaks away. The special effects guy was told to hit it when my foot was actually on it, which would give me a good position. When I actually did it, he fired just as my foot was coming down to it, so I've gone through the air in a very bad position and my foot hit the canopy underneath - I think it was the canopy that did it, that twisted my ankle - so just my foot was going through before the rest of my body hit it. Then I hit the pavement down below, and you see me crawl to my position where I got killed. I'm keeping my right leg curled under... They cut and I was taken to hospital where they put me in plaster and I came back in the afternoon. They put me in the same position, laying down, buried my foot in all the rubble and exterminated me dead! But I couldn't keep still, with the pain. I was in agony..."

The Dulick film was one of the stunt upon which Eddie has worked as stunt co-ordinator (others include 633 Squadron, A High Wind In Jamaica and Great Balls of Fire). For Hammer, he oversaw action-work on 1968's Quatermass and the Pit. "People are rushing around, falling down the steps... it was me that was rolling off the Mars space machine that they dug out." A great deal of extras were involved in the chaotic, rubble-strewn underground sequences, which posed question marks over safety: some ten stuntmen were involved. "What they generally do if there's a lot of people - especially with Hammer films - the people in the foreground would be the ones coping most of it, all the rubble coming down, would be stuntmen. You'd have crowd running through in the background, with no chance of getting hurt." He also supervised sequences on The Devil Rides Out. "I was in charge of all the little stunts and bits and pieces on that. The cars zooming round, going through the crowd... A lot of fun and games and getting paid for it!"

Eddie believes it is wise to work closely with a director to achieve the finished result: "They say what they want... It's up to me to give them as much as I can. If something's impossible, I have to tell them it's impossible. You have to come up with your own ideas too. Some they throw out, others they don't." He's only had to say an absolute 'no' on one or two occasions, with regard to safety for actors. "I had quite an argument on a television thing called The XYY Men. On the top of this building there was a fire escape and there was a ledge above the fire escape before you came to a short wall with a hole going through to the roof itself. They wanted the actor to get on top of the balustrade, climb onto the ledge, go across away from the staircase itself - so now you're over about a hundred foot deep - and to go up through this hole and onto the roof. He [the actor involved] was prepared to do it, he didn't want a double, so I said, 'You'll have to have a safety harness.' He was screaming and shouting that he didn't need a safety line, which I found absolutely ridiculous and I insisted. The director was called and I said,

'Well, I won't accept any responsibility if this goes wrong.' The director swallowed it, so they had to use it [the harness]. I did see a thing [in the paper, about a week later. These two actors were literally up on that ledge, walking along, no safety harness, nothing. Whatever they were trying to prove. I don't know. Ledges have been known to break. I wouldn't do that myself...]

"I believe in safety. I've had accidents myself. I've ended up dead on the operating-table..." He explains. "On The Sea Wolves, dispatching Gregory Peck, there was a high fall backwards, about 60 feet down [into the sea]. When I hit the water, it was like hitting that." He slaps his palm hard on the surface of the table. "I felt something go in my back. Anyway, I carried on working for another week - I thought I'd just pulled a muscle, or something. On the plane, flying back home, when we'd finished the film, I got very dizzy and passed out. There were a few doctors on board, all giving me injections, saying 'heart attack.' The pilot diverted the plane to Rome, where they dumped me in an ambulance. Nobody got off with me. So I'm taken to this hospital, where they put me



Christopher Lee, Patrick Wymore and Paul Eddington rehearse in some of the stunt work Eddie supervised on 1968's The Devil Rides Out.

on a heart machine. Nothing wrong with my heart at all. They took me to a ward. They're all standing round, prodding me... they dragged me down into the bowels of the Earth, put me on an operating-table and that was the last thing I remembered until I came to. Evidently, what I'd done was ruptured my spleen. I was bleeding to death, internally. The flight was nearly finishing me off. In the morning, there was a nurse that came in - the first nurse that spoke English. She said, 'we were very worried for a little while, we lost you...'

"I just remember looking out of the window, looking at the top of a tree. That's all I could see, all nice and green, and I thought, 'life is beautiful...'"

Still working (recent assignments have included stunt-work on the Harrison Ford film Patriot Games) Eddie has absolutely no plans to retire. "I always enjoy it, whatever I'm doing. You get moments of trepidation, mind you - and fear; obviously; but all in all, I've always enjoyed the business. I don't reckon on giving up for some time yet!"



Photo © Robin Pearson/ITC



Illustration: Pyramidology by Claudio Amaldi

Canopic jars, razor blades and 'the pyramid inch'

Jonathan Rigby looks at the origins of 'pyramidology'...



The Ancient Egyptians not only created arguably the world's first grand civilisation, they also perfected perhaps the most elaborate 'culture' of death in history. The pyramids were constructed not as refuges for the dead. The pharaohs interred in them expected to 'die' in the style to which they had become accustomed, hence the fabulous treasures which accompanied them on the 'journey'. They recognised no clear demarcation between living and dying despite the grisly particulars of their own mummification. The brain was pulled out through the nostrils and most other essential organs by the opposite route. Anointed with soda and spices, the parts were individually wrapped and either preserved in canopic jars or returned to the parent body, which was then carefully wound in linen bandages.

The first Egyptian pyramid was probably the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, commissioned by Zoser in the third dynasty and designed by his chief minister Imhotep (A name which we shall encounter again...)

He would no doubt have been intrigued by the host of sometimes wayward theories that subsequently grew up around the tombs. Distinguished British astronomer Charles Flazan Smith arrived in Egypt in 1864 and devised a theory of 'pyramidology', claiming that the structure of the tombs held special, prophetic significance for the Christian faith. To drive this, he even developed the so-called 'pyramid inch', which corresponded to 1.001 of an ordinary inch. American seer Edgar Cayce, meanwhile, insisted that beneath the pyramids lay libraries of secret lore from the lost continent of Atlantis. More recently, the discovery that the shape of the pyramids somehow promotes natural mummification led, on a more mundane level, to a Czechoslovakian radio engineer, Karel Dřhal, noticing the wondrous effect a model pyramid had on his Hunded razor blades. In 1959 his 'Cheops Pyramid Razor Blade Sharpener' was formally granted Czechoslovak Republic Patent No. 91304 and did brisk business.

In a more unpalatable tribute to the legendary magical powers of the Ancient Egyptian priesthood, no self-respecting doctor in the 16th and 17th centuries would have considered a prescription worth the name without a generous sprinkling of 'good and mummy'. More essentially, in the 1780s Italian occultist Cagliostro developed his theory of 'Egyptian masonry' - in the secret society sense rather than the architectural one. Styling himself the Grand Copt, he became High Priest of the 'Temple of Isis' so as to initiate others into the 'mysteries of the pyramids'.

The Ancient Egyptian cult of death had been a good deal less appealing, however, to the rulers of Egypt immediately following the pharaohs. The Roman conquerors under Emperor Justinian finally outlawed the worship of Isis and Christian rulers between the 4th and 6th centuries AD were even more uncompromising in their revulsion for the pagan grandeur of the pyramids and the Sphinx. When Arab conquerors brought Islam to Egypt in the seventh century, the destructive effect was complete. Many centuries were to pass before conquerors from Western Europe finally set about piercing the mysteries of Ancient Egypt. First the French under Napoleon, then the British

from 1882 onwards, brought a new technological approach to the task. The crowning glory of all the renewed activity followed in November 1922. The opening of Tutankhamun's tomb, and attendant press speculation regarding its curse caused a worldwide sensation and provided an obvious pointer for literati.

Literary antecedents of avenging mummies Imhotep, Khams, Preen and the rest are few and far between however. William Bayle Bernard furnished the British and American stage with *The Mummy*: or, *The Liquor of Life* - a piece that remained popular throughout the 1830s and 40s. Jane Webb's three-volume novel, *The Mummy: A Tale of the Twenty Second Century*, however, had appeared as early as 1827. Letter From a Revived Mummy, a story of galvanic resurrection anonymously published in the *New York Evening Mirror* in January 1832, inspired Edgar Allan Poe's droll political satire of 1845, *Scene With a Mummy*. Thophile Gautier had adopted a more whimsical tone in *Le Pied de Momie* (1840), so it was left to Arthur Conan Doyle to strike a genuinely horrific note... ✠



Jonathan Rigby braves
a hundred years of terror
from the tomb.

It went for a little walk...

Conan Doyle's leanings towards the lund and loutish were found an occasional outlet in the Sherlock Holmes stories but were given full vent in what he called his "real Creepers". Among these are *Lot No. 249* (1892) - which Rudyard Kipling claimed gave him his first nightmare in years - and from 1890, *The Hound of the Baskin's* - from Richard Marsh, Bram Stoker, Algernon Blackwood, Sax Rohmer, Burton Stevenson, HP Lovecraft and Frank Belknap Long - but it was *Thoth*, with its theme of love reaching across the centuries, that was fitted wholesale (and without acknowledgment) when Hollywood ventured into the field.

Only a handful of films had treated the theme prior to the Tutankhamun hysteria of the 1920s. Magicians-turned-filmmakers Georges Melies and Walter Booth produced a couple of novelty items at the turn of the century. Melies with *Cleopatra in 1899* and Booth with *The Hound of the Baskin's* in 1901. *The Vengeance of Egypt* (1912) and *The Avenging Hand* (1915) are both lost, but Earl Jennings and Pola Negri in *Die Augen der Mumie Ma* (1918) survive. More "Svengali" than Egyptology it bears little relation to the sophisticated comedies with which director Ernst Lubitsch was to find fame at Paramount. Or indeed to future Mummy films which began in earnest with Universal's *The Mummy* of 1932.

More a delicate necrophile romance than a horror shocker, the film was directed by ace German cinematographer Karl Freund and billed its parchment-faced star simply as "Karlöff the Uncanny". Ironically, Boris Karloff was coated from head to foot in "beauty wax" and swathed in colloidal-soaked cotton strips for an extremely brawny appearance as mummified imitator; elsewhere he floated ominously through the story as alarmingly desiccated Ardash Bey. "Beside the theme of an Egyptian prince coming back to life and taking up his thwarted love affair with the modern reincarnation of his princess where he left off 3,000 years ago, the no box man idea of Frankenstein became almost conventional!" exclaimed *Film Weekly*. The film was essentially a remake, with the locale shifted, of Universal's *Dracula*; sixty years later Francis Ford Coppola would reverse this trick by remaking *The Mummy* as Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

Shortly before *The Mummy* another Karloff vehicle, *The Mask of Fu Manchu*, had featured an hilarious hi-jacking scene in which the kidnappers are lumberingly disguised as mummies. Unfortunately Universal's belated series of Mummy sequels was hardly less risible. *The Mummy's Hand* (1940) at least had a certain pulp vitality to commend it. Fading cowboy star Tom Tyler's arthritis lent a certain verisimilitude to his starchy Khediv, and the impressive temple set was inherited from a more expensive production - James Whale's jungle extravaganza *Green Hell*. By the time Lon Chaney Jr walked (or rather lurched) through the role in these irredeemable potboilers (*The Mummy's Tomb*, *Ghost and Curse*) make-up designer Jack Pierce had reduced the "facial" process to an easy-to-apply mask. It was hardly necessary, in 1954, for Abbot and Costello to meet the Mummy, now essayed by Chaney's stunt-double Eddie Parker for the decadence of the Universal cycle to be complete.

Disposable crimes like *Curse of the Faceless Man* and *Pharaoh's Curse*, together with the inauguration of a Mexican series with *La Momia Azteca*, led up to Hammer's debut in the field. Terence Fisher's sumptuous and stately *The Mummy* of 1959 restored dignity to the theme after a lapse of twenty-seven years. Christopher Lee's Khediv was statuesque, athletic and heart-rending: three notable innovations. *La Vengeance de la Momie* (1973) and *Dawn of the Mummy* (1981) thrust the Pharaohs unceremoniously into the splatter genre while *Therewolf* (1982) had one originating in outer space. But before these Hammer had produced three further Mummy titles. *The Mummy's Shroud* was the second of them.



Lon Chaney Jr. lurching through *The Mummy's Tomb*

"There would be no horror films at all if people would just mind their own business and stop meddling with bodies better left dead."

Cecil Wilson, June 1967





THE MUMMY'S SHROUD

Cast and credits

Sir Basil Walden
Stanley Preston
Paul Preston
Barbara Preston
Claire
Longbarrow
Harry
Inspector Barrow
Hasmid
Halti
Prem
Pharaoh
Pharaoh's Wife
Kah-ta-Bey
The Mummy
The Curator
Narrator
1st Reporter
2nd Reporter
Sweeper

Andre Morell
John Phillips
David Buck
Elizabeth Sellars
Maggie Kennedy
Michael Ripper
Tim Barrett
Richard Warner
Roger Delgado
Catherine Lacey
Dickie Owen
Bruno Barnabe
Toni Gilpin
Toslic Persaud
Eddie Powell
Andreas Nalandrinus
Unknown *
Unknown *
Unknown *

Music composed by
Musical Supervisor
Director of Photography
Production Supervisor
Supervising Editor
Production Manager
Editor
Assistant Director
Camera Operator
Art Director
Sound Recordist
Sound Editor
Continuity
Make-up
Hair Stylist
Wardrobe Mistress
Wardrobe Master
Casting
Special Effects
Screenplay by
From an original story by
Executive Producer
Produced by
Directed by

Dan Banks
Philip Martell
Arthur Grant BSC
Bernard Robinson
James Needs
Ed Harper
Chris Barnes
Blair Hill
Mervyn Grant
Dan Mingaye
Ken Rawkins
Roy Hyde
Eileen Head
George Parfitt
Frieda Steiger
Molly Arbuthnot
Larry Stewart
Irene Lamb
Bovic Films Ltd
John Gilling
John Elder †
Anthony Hinds *
Anthony Nelson Keys
John Gilling

* Uncredited in finished print;
† Pseudonym for Anthony Hinds.

Associated British-Pathe Limited presents
A Hammer Film Production

Credit order taken from film titles, supplemented by additional
credits from original press releases.
Certificate 'X'
Duration 84 minutes, length 7,591 feet.
Produced at Bray Studios, England
Technicolor
RCA Sound Recording
Released through Warner-Pathe Film Distributors Limited
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The Characters



SIR BASIL WALDEN

"You can never tell in the desert . . ."
Distinguished archaeologist Sir Basil feels a heavy weight of responsibility for his expeditionary companions. He's first in line at Kah-to-Bey's tomb and takes an artist's delight in the discovery, an enthusiasm brutally brushed aside by his philistine backer. Having been bitten by a snake he goes into a rapid decline, ending up a broken man pleading only for "rest". Prem provides it all too efficiently.

STANLEY PRESTON

"Do you think I'm going to sit here waiting for some murdering swine to get at me?"
The wealthy, egomaniac industrialist has sunk £12,000 into Sir Basil's expedition but, when events take an uncomfortable turn, is ready to spend another £10,000 to bribe his way home. An ignorant, bullying, vainglorious vulgarism, he is in reality every bit as craven and insecure as his long-suffering dog's body, Longbarrow. His rendezvous with Prem is long overdue . . .



PAUL PRESTON

"Someone - or something - is trying to destroy us and I believe it'll find us wherever we go."
Paul knows his father too well to be deceived by any of his machinations and in fact is "sick with embarrassment" at the very sight of him. He finds an alternative father in Sir Basil, whom he idolizes and who's worth ten Stanley Prestons to him. Infected by Claire's sense of destiny, he stays behind to avenge not his father's death but Sir Basil's.

BARBARA PRESTON

"I don't really think you need concern yourself on my account. You see, I did not enter the tomb."
After 26 years as Stanley Preston's wife, Barbara has adopted a serene and unruffled exterior that needles Preston no end, since he's dimly aware that it conceals a profound contempt for him. She quietly revels in Stanley's mounting discomfiture, aware in advance of its grisly conclusion. And she's entirely unmoved when her presentiments come true.



CLAIRE DE SANGRE

"I had the feeling that, if I spoke the words, I would be animating some horrible thing that might be uncontrollable . . ."
A brilliant linguist, Claire is also looked to by her fellow archaeologists whenever anything in the nature of second sight is required. Indeed, in her cut-glass Oxbridge tones, she is given to making oracular pronouncements so portentous and pessimistic they'd break up any party-even an expeditionary one.

LONGBARROW

"It will be nice to see the shady lanes of the old country again . . ."
A whipping-boy for boorish bullies, no doubt from an early age, Longbarrow finds a prize specimen in Stanley Preston. His pathetic self-absorption in his boss's presence and his eagerness to accompany him on the homeward journey amounts to a masochistic kind of love, although not quite the tender feeling he seems to harbour for Mrs Preston. Tragically, his only bedroom scene is played out with Prem . . .



HARRY NEWTON

"At this stage I think we ought to remind ourselves we're living in the twentieth century."
Longbarrow and Mrs Preston are agreed that Harry is a nice young man, but the expedition's resident photographer is perhaps too nice and too innocuous to make the kind of impression on Claire he'd like. A horse fancier, he looks forward to visiting the Derby with Claire, but Prem's cavalier treatment of Harry's photographic chemicals puts paid to such aspirations - and indeed to Harry.

HAITI

"Death is coming . . . Prepare yourself for death . . ."
Haiti is a crystal-gazing clairvoyant, "the most famous in all Egypt" according to her visiting card. "Call for appointment at number 8, Alley of the House of Mukhtar" and listen to a personal forecast even more depressing than Claire's predictions - and delivered with a lot more fig-snacking, sadistic gusto. "Death", as Haiti puts it, "can be very sweet . . ."



The Legend of Kah-to-Bey

In the year 2000 BC, there was born to the reigning Pharaoh of Egypt a son. For many years the Pharaoh, Men-tah, had prayed to the gods for this blessing that came so late in life. At last he had an heir, and as he presented the child to his rejoicing people, he felt strong, proud and secure. Men-tah faced the future with pride and contentment.

Yet evil men had already sworn allegiance to Men-tah's younger brother, Armen-tah, who saw in the child Kah-to-Bey an end to all his hopes of accession. Men-tah was too absorbed in his child and all he portended for the future to be aware of the dark clouds already gathering. Yet, as he offered a prayer of thanksgiving to the gods, invoking their blessings in the years to come, tragedy was already preparing to intrude. For even as he turned from the cheering crowds outside his palace the cold finger of death was soon to touch the heart of his beloved...

In the presence of his dying Queen, Men-tah named his child Kah-to-Bey the next Pharaoh. Silently, the attending physicians watched the life that gave Pharaoh his son flutter into oblivion. The head slave, Prem, bowed his head with the rest in sorrow, sharing Pharaoh's grief. The young queen had given Pharaoh his dearest wish - an heir to the throne of Egypt. So the people rejoiced. They sang and danced in the streets, believing the gods were smiling upon them.

Year after year, Pharaoh watched Kah-to-Bey grow towards manhood. He devoted every moment to the child who was destined to succeed him. He lived only for his son. So engrossed was he in the future that the past and present became of no account. He was deaf to the warning voices of his advisors, and while Men-tah dreamed, Armen-tah continued to scheme against the throne. He was exhorting his followers to violence. His secret army grew, and finally struck.

Men-tah and his guards were hopelessly outnumbered. The slave, Prem, fought valiantly to lay down their lives for their prince, but in vain. Not one of the royal household was to be left alive - this was Armen-tah's decree. But before the murderous onslaught became the final toll, Men-tah exhorted Prem to try and escape to the desert with the young prince.

These men were the sole survivors of the holocaust. Like Prem, they were slaves determined to lay down their lives for their prince. Along the first few miles of scorching desert sand, they were sustained in their belief that Armen-tah's treachery might yet recoil upon him. One day, Kah-to-Bey might return to his rightful place on the throne of Egypt. As they trudged on, the slave Prem surely prayed for some future bloodbath of vengeance. But the Gods had



laid their plans. Armen-tah was to rule many years before he came to a traitor's death and Kah-to-Bey was not to live to see the final overthrow.

The slaves' faith in their leader, Prem, never wavered. Prem would guide them out of the desert wilderness. They never doubted him. They would follow him into eternity. But they lacked provisions. Very little water amongst them, and practically no food. The gods seemed determined to reserve their favours for the usurper Armen-tah. As all hope started to fade even Prem's massive strength and resolve to save his young prince began to waver. In the teeth of fierce desert storms, the remaining survivors carried Kah-to-Bey to his last resting place. As he lay dying, Kah-to-Bey presented to Prem the Royal Seal of the Pharaohs. With reverence, Prem covered his young master's body with the Sacred Shroud. In the language of the Pharaohs, Prem recorded the time and the place...



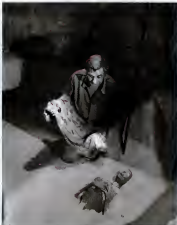
The Story

In the year 1920 an expedition, financed by a wealthy industrialist Stanley Preston, and led by the distinguished archaeologist Sir Basil Baskin, set out to find the tomb of Kah-to-Bey. Their return to the base at Mezera was now more than a month overdue. Speculation as to their fate became news headlines...

A hotel in the Egyptian city of Mezera. Newly arrived from England, Stanley Preston and his wife Barbara are met by Preston's manservant Longbarrow. A pack of reporters eagerly await for news of the efforts to trace the lost expedition, which includes the Prestons' son Paul. Fending the press off with a promise of a news conference the next morning, Preston retires to his suite, with which he is thoroughly unimpressed.

A sandstorm rages around a tent in the desert, where the thirsty survivors of the expedition - Sir Basil, Paul, photographer Harry Newman and linguist Claire de Sangre - are sheltering. They decide to press on with their efforts to locate the tomb of Kah-to-Bey, even with barely enough water left to sustain them. At Preston's news conference in Mezera's Restoration House, a temporary museum, the financier is embarrassed into joining one of the search parties. The mummified figure of the slave Prem, the recovery of whose body inspired the expedition in the first place, looks on impassively as Preston exits.

In the desert, the storm abates and Sir Basil's team discover the rock inscribed by Prem centuries before, which indicates the direction of the Rock of Death - Kah-to-Bey's legendary resting place. Entering the caverns beneath the rock, the party are confronted by an Arab - Hasmid Ali, self-proclaimed "Keeper of the Tomb" - who warns that death awaits all who enter this sacred ground; he then scurries away. Investigating an inscription, Sir Basil is bitten by a snake hiding under a stone. The group help him back to the mouth of the caves, where they are found by Stanley Preston's search party. The next morning, they begin to dig away at the entrance to the tomb, sealed-up deep inside the caves. Upon their eventual breakthrough Preston, Sir Basil, Paul, Harry, Claire and Longbarrow enter, where they discover Kah-to-Bey's body buried under the Sacred Shroud, upon which are



written the arcane words of Life and Death. Claire is called upon to translate the words out loud but refuses, sensing danger.

Back in the Restoration House, Kah-to-Bey's body, laid out in Prem's shadow, is revealed to the press. Sir Basil, however, hogs the headlines when he collapses and rumours of a curse spread like wildfire. Shortly afterwards, the archaeologist is interned to a lunatic asylum. Paul accuses his father of having Sir Basil removed for his own ends, jealous perhaps of Sir Basil's burgeoning reputation. Meanwhile, Sir Basil breaks out. Pursued by the police, he seeks refuge in the Alley of the House of Mukhtar, where the clairvoyant Hatti reads his future in her crystal ball, presaging doom. Her son, Hasmid Ali, nevertheless breaks into the Restoration House and reads the Words of Life from the Shroud. Prem's mummy comes to life and departs to Hatti's house where it crushes Sir Basil's head to a pulp.

Sir Basil's corpse is found the next day in the Restoration House. The mummies are intact but the Shroud has been stolen. Barrani, the investigating inspector, refuses to allow Preston and company to leave Mezera. In the hotel lobby Claire is handed Hatti's business card. That night photographer Harry is killed by the mummy. Preston is panicked and orders Longbarrow to book passage out of the city, first for the whole group and then covertly for Preston alone. Come the night and Longbarrow too is killed by the avenging creature. Furtively sneaking away, Preston is ensnared by Hasmid and in turn murdered by the mummy.

Barrani lifts his veto upon Paul and Claire's leaving but they elect to stay and see it through. Paul discovers blood on the mummy's hands; Claire meanwhile goes to Hatti who instructs her to beg forgiveness from the mummy - for her transgressing Kah-to-Bey's tomb - then to recite the Words of Death from the Shroud to destroy it. She goes to the Restoration House and begins to do so - but Hasmid hidden in the shadows and clutching the Shroud brings the mummy to life. It staggers towards her...

Paul and Barrani run through the doors to her rescue. Hemmed in by Prem, Claire recites the Words of Death, only to be informed by Hasmid that "only they who hold the Shroud have the power to destroy." Barrani promptly shoots him. Paul seizes the Shroud and hands it to Claire, who completes her recital. The mummy crumbles itself to dust with its own hands. Claire places the Shroud over Kah-to-Bey's body once more.



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67/82

In Production

**"I wasn't very proud of
The Mummy's Shroud.
In fact I thought it was
one of my worst!"
John Gilling**

The Mummy's Shroud, Hammer's third excursion into Egyptian mythology, was budgeted at £134,049. Assigned to write both the screenplay and direct was old-hand John Gilling, veteran of many a Gothic horror. Having completed work on the 1966 Where the Bunnies Fly he was set a deadline of 13th July 1966 to deliver a full script from Tony Hlind's pseudonymous story outline.

Gilling readily admitted that helming the film ("... rather a worn-out theme") was not his ideal choice of directorial appointment; in an interview with US fan magazine Little Shoppe of Horrors he said, "I accepted The Mummy's Shroud assignment partly to escape from the claustrophobic influence of television, which over a rather long period I had found myself being more and more concerned with... although the money was good, I was beginning to wilt under the rules and regulations of the factory system imposed on one."

Two of the behind-the-scenes talents originally approached to work alongside him had to drop out for reasons unknown. Andrew Low was replaced as Art Director by Don Mingaye and Franz Reizenstein, composer of the score for the original 1959 The Mummy, deferred to Don Banks.

The Script

Dated 6th September 1966, the final draft screenplay bears some substantial differences from that eventually shot. The opening narration is markedly shorter and contains an exchange between the Pharaoh, Men-tah and a sage, who nods wisely after the Queen's death and says, "She gave you your dearest wish. It is still a time to rejoice." When Armet-tah's men storm the palace, the first shot indicated is of "the toppling off of the head of one of Men-tah's guards." As Kah-to-Bey's cortege hike across the desert's "dazzling, white-hot sand" buzzards are seen circling above them.

Claire begins life as simply 'Claire'; Inspector Barnum starts out as 'Art' then 'Gale' in later revisions, before settling for his eventual monicker. There are many minor differences in dialogue; rehearsals, lines swapped from one character to another and so on. More significantly, several speeches would be lost entirely. Sir Basil's translation of Hasmid's Arabic upon their first encounter in the caverns would have run: "He says that only those who are untouched by the contaminations of the world can approach the tomb and live. But not even these can enter the tomb." The



hieroglyphics translated by Claire moments later ("Rest in peace...") would have read, "Kah-to-Bey will be left to sleep for all eternity." And Sir Basil would have stuck his hand into a whole nest of "whirling and hissing" vipers, rather than the single sorry specimen that actually bites him! Whereupon Paul would take his knife and cut "deep into Sir Basil's arm. Black blood gushes from the wound... Claire squeezes the wound to assist the flow of blood. Then Sir Basil raises his arm to his mouth and sucks hard on the wound, afterwards spitting out the blood." This would be condensed on-screen, rendered by reaction shots only.

Comedy too would be lost. When the search party find the explorers, Stanley Preston's suggestion that Longbarrow might take some photographs in the morning earns the mirror's response: "Yes, Mr Preston - with a nice caption such as: 'Father and son reunited in desert after weeks of anxious search.' I think I could get that into the News of the World." Preston's reply? "Try The Times first..." Later, as Paul and Harry labour away to open up the tomb, Preston is seen "reclining in the shade of a rock," dictating his memoirs to Longbarrow: "I started excavating on the 10th of July, 1920. From the onset, we realised that the work would be arduous and dangerous. The heat was fantastic in the dark, cramped quarters in which we had to work. There was also the danger of mutiny among the porters. Twice I had to hold them at gunpoint... We slaved on through the boiling heat of the day! A still survives, indicating that this scene was indeed shot."

Kah-to-Bey's mummy is not the wrinkled prune of the film, rather "the perfect semblance of a human face and body. Skin, hair, etc. as intact yet so opaque in appearance that one would suspect it could crumble if breathed upon." Back in the Restoration House, Sir Basil's collapse is prefigured by Hasmid's distorted voice echoing in his head: "Prem, the devoted slave who buried his master Kah-to-Bey. Kah-to-Bey. Kah-to-Bey." Stanley Preston dies a far more graphic death in this script than the straightforward throttling and hang-on-the-head that dispatches him on screen. After Hasmid has left to fetch his mythical 'brother', Preston is alarmed by a sound in the street behind him:

"Preston starts to run and falls heavily against a cask of wine. After trying to raise himself - he falls again - and overturns the cask spilling red wine in a great deluge onto the ground."

Then he sees the figure of Prem reflected in the wine.

With a wild scream, he struggles to his feet and then Prem reaches out for him. Prem drags him, kicking and screaming, to a wall...

Preston's final death scene, as Prem smashes his head against the wall,

Preston is suddenly hurled into foreground picture. The blood from his smashed head mingling with the puddles of wine."



Longbarrow (Michael Robert) expresses reservations as Preston (John Phillips) dictates his background memoirs. A scene missing from the finished film



Casting

Top-billed in *The Mummy's Shroud*, playing the Howard Carter-esque archaeologist Sir Basil Wolden, was Hammer stalwart André (credited as Andre) Morell. He had previously been notable in Hammer productions such as *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and the previous year's *The Plague of the Zombies*.

Originally cast as the young male lead was John Richardson, who had made his mark in 1964's epic *Sue*. However, a last-minute top-level decision saw Richardson's contract transferred to 1967's sequel, *The Voyage of She*.

Character actor John Phillips took the rôle of the scheming Stanley Preston. Other genre portrayals in his long career include General Leighton in 1960's *Village of the Damned* with Barbara Shelley; and 'Storm' in Amicus's 1967 *Torture Garden*. More recently, he played King David in the 1991 children's television series, *Merlin of the Crystal Cave*.

The heroic young lead, David Buck, began his career in a 1962 BBC television production of Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard*; his first film rôle that same year was as Harry Banks in Disney's *Dr Syn: Alias the Scoundrel*. In later years he worked consistently in radio and also provided the voice of Gimli in Ralph Bakshi's animated 1978 *Lord of the Rings*. Similarly he can be heard in Jim Henson's *The Dark Crystal* (1982) as the Skeksis slave-master. His last work was in television's *Father Brown*; he died in February 1989.



His co-star in *The Mummy's Shroud*, Maggie Kimberley, managed only two other film credits: as Jacqueline in Gilling's previous *Where the Bullets Fly* and as Elizabeth Clark in Michael Reeves's final film, *Witchfinder General* (1968).

Roger Delgado was cast to type as a villainous foreigner, pace 1961's notorious *The Terror of the Tongs*. He'd make a considerable impact as 'the Master', a semi-regular ne'er-do-well nemesis to Jon Pertwee's *Doctor Who*, before tragically falling victim to a car crash in 1973.

Making her sole appearance in a Hammer production was the eminent British actress Catherine Lacey, cast as the spooky clairvoyant Hatti. Born in 1904, Catherine's debut feature was Alfred Hitchcock's classic *The Lady Vanishes* in 1938. Other distinguished pictures followed - Powell and Pressburger's *I Know Where I'm Going* (1945); Ealing's *Whisky Galore* (1949); and the little-known 1953 sequel *Rochester Galore*, the Dixon Welles vehicle *Crack in the Mirror* (1960); and a tour de force as the real star of the aforementioned Michael Reeves's 1967 *The Sorcerers*, her only other horror rôle. She died in 1979.

And Dickie Dore, the bandaged brute of *The Curse of the Mummy's Tomb* (1966), here took the part of the living Prince stuntsman Eddie Powell, having previously doubled for Christopher Lee's *Mummy in 1959*, played *Pharaoh* resurrected after ego.

Shooting

The Mummy's Shroud - the last Hammer feature to be mounted at Bray Studios - began shooting on Monday 12th September 1966, the six week schedule ending on Friday 21st October. Blatantly, the company's first film shot at Bray - 1951's *Cloudburst* - was their only other feature to include veteran actress Elizabeth Sellars in the cast!

Just one day of location shooting was deemed necessary, for the desert sequences in the first third of the script; however, the entrance to the actual cavern itself was a small set constructed in the studio.

Records documenting the precise site of the outside shoot have since been lost; the sandpit appears to have been the nearby quarry at Wapsey's Wood, Gerrards Cross. The bazaar and alleyways of Mezzera were constructed on the exterior lot at Bray; everything else was mounted in studio. Two shots of the Mezzera skyline seen briefly in the film were taken from stock footage.

The design of the mummy was based on a genuine relic resident in the British Museum's Egypt Room - that of a later Roman body. It can still be seen today in Room 60.

The mummy's impressive demise was filmed at Les Bowie's studio in Slough. Assistant Ian Scoones recalls collaborating on the sequence clearly: "We completely reconstructed the set from Bray which we put on a rostrum so we could work underneath it. The disintegration of the mummy was something we worked for weeks to perfect - we tried everything from acid to poppados to get the right effect. In the end we used Fuller's Earth mixed with paint dust on a wax head." It is Scoones's gloved hands that can be seen clawing away from under the rostrum as the creature's head is reduced to dust.

Michael Ripper, playing the cowering manservant Longbottom ("... one of the few times where I got to create a truly sympathetic character") had mixed feelings about working with Gilling once more: "... he was certainly not the best director I ever worked with, but on the other hand he always did manage to bring out the best in me! I thoroughly enjoyed working with him, although we would occasionally clash," he said in 1979. Gilling reciprocated in kind, praising Ripper's performance: "I think Michael is a very neglected artist. I cast him with a view of introducing some lighter touches into the movie and I think these may have saved it from being a total disaster."

The film proved to be an undistinguished end to the director's British career. Gilling moved to Spain in 1970, where four years later he made his last feature, *La Cruz del Diablo* (*The Devil's Cross*). He spent his time 'writing, travelling, painting', eventually becoming a permanent resident. He died in Madrid on 22nd November 1984, at the age of 72.

With the completion of the final scenes on *The Mummy's Shroud*, an era had come to an end. Hammer realised their long-planned intention to close Bray Studios shortly after; it was now simply too small and not cost-effective enough for the regular and exhaustive schedule being worked. Many of the 'permanent' exterior sets on the lot were left to rot until the house was sold off by James Carreras in 1970; the asking price was £250,000. However, the following year's *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth* would see a very short-lived return to the studio, where some of the Dinosaur-nominated effects were shot. Bray remains a working studio to this day; lately it has provided a home for television programmes as varied as *Demob*, *Pic in the Sky*, *Murder Most Horrid*, and the BBC's off rig drama *Roughnecks*.



Now Bray is for sale

REPORTS that Bray studios, near Windsor, are temporarily closed with no future in production, would be sold have been confirmed by *THE SUNDAY TIMES*, by Sir James Carreras.

"We would like to sell them," he said. "We are no longer needed for our own films and we don't have any more film on the premises."

Pointing out that Bray had recently had two great hits for color productions, for instance, and that they were well equipped for future films of the type, he said: "We would like to sell them, but we would like to know if we could sell them for a better price."

What is the value of Bray studios? "I would say about £250,000" said the Hammer chief.

As well as Hammer, the founders of the studio, were sold by EMI, originally by AMPL and Columbia Pictures.

The film's American trailer opened with the typically sensationalist warning of:

Nightmare Terror from the Tomb

An ancient curse comes to life, to strangle the living and raise the dead! Here is the horror and the terror of a story that began in ancient Egypt when Kah-to-Bey, a son of Pharaoh, died in the desert and was covered in the shroud that bore the sacred power of life and death!

Warning to every creature of flesh and blood beware the beat of the cloth wrapped feet! Beware the curse of the mummy's shroud!

This is the leader of the British expedition who came in search of the tomb: the rich and ruthless financier, who believes money can bribe even the Devil himself; this is the son, who knows there is no escape; the wife and mother, trapped by the mummy's shroud; this is Hatti, the crystal-gazer, who sees into the past and the terrifying future; this is the girl who's doomed, cursed by the mummy's shroud!

Dead a thousand years, now he lives and breathes to avenge an ancient curse -

TO STRANGLE THE LIVING RAISE THE DEAD PREY UPON HUMAN FLESH

On Release

Twinned with *Frankenstein Created Women*, the film premiered in America, initially released on Wednesday 15th March 1967. In the UK, after a trade show on 3rd May, *The Mummy's Shroud* was shown as a support feature to the Peter Cushing/Susan Denberg feature, opening at London's New Victoria Theatre on Thursday 18th May. The double bill subsequently went on general release via the ABC chain, screening to the public from Sunday 18th June. A 'Private and Confidential' report on the pros and cons of the film was prepared for the distributors Warner-Pathe by McCarthy of 122 Whitfield Street, London W1. The feature's 'Suitability' was deemed thus:

"... this is rather a run-of-the-mill would-be thriller about the tombs of the ancient Pharaohs. It is, in fact, devoid of any novel ideas and the spectacle of stalling and murdering people has had its day in this field of entertainment... Gee glaring piece of shoddiness is that of an aged fortune-teller whose crystal ball is a sort of short circuit TV in which she can watch the movements of others. Technically it is quite good and it is very well served by the cast, especially John Phillips, as an impossible, egotistical industrialist, and Michael Ripper, as his nervous, cringing servant... a dull film in which the editing really takes precedence over what is intended to be sensational thrills. Only in the last scene when the mummy crumbles to dust does it reveal that ingenuity which is so vital to this class of film..."

PRESSBOOK



Above: the film's American press book.

Known in France as *Dans les Griffes de la Momie* (In the Claws of the Mummy) and in Germany as *Der Fluch der Mumie* (The Curse of the Mummy), *The Mummy's Shroud* was later adapted as a comic strip in issue 15 of the mid-seventies *The House of Hammer* magazine. The film was first released on VHS video in the UK by Lumiere Pictures on 27th February 1995.

Left: one of the film's lobby cards, issued alongside *Port of Horror* stars for cinema promotion.

Nightmare Terror From The Tomb



"THE MUMMY'S SHROUD"

WARNER BROS. JOHN PHILLIPS DAVID BUCK FILM BY DAVID BUCK CASTING BY JILL CLAYTON COSTUME DESIGNER JILL CLAYTON EDITOR JILL CLAYTON PRODUCTION DESIGNER JILL CLAYTON EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JILL CLAYTON PRODUCED BY JILL CLAYTON WRITTEN BY JILL CLAYTON DIRECTED BY DAVID BUCK

Comment

"Cackling imprecations . . ."

The Americans took the first potshots at Hammer's third Egyptian adventure. Reviewing in *Variety* on 29th March 1967, 'Bely' wrote:

"Although meagre sequences create some tension and splash a lot of gore, dialog, characterizations and plot have little to recommend them. With such of mere marquee value pic would seem to have no place to go except bottom half of double bills . . . Michael Ripper does the best job as the hardened, intellectual stonog . . . and Roger Delgado and Catherine Lacey have a good time as the wacky mystics . . . Maggie Kennedy has an amusing face, but acting by her. Andre Morell, [John] Phillips, David Buck and Elizabeth Selous in the lead roles are unimpressive. Granted, they had little to work with . . ."

Michael Ripper would be quite chuffed by the praise awarded him personally. "I got good notices for that here; they said that it didn't usually happen that potshots was brought into a horror film." Nevertheless, the critics were pretty scathing about the film's overall lack of merit; for example, Britain's *Monthly Film Bulletin* said the following June:

"Stilted remake of the old avenging mummy routine, brightened from time to time by Catherine Lacey as a toothless hag cackling imprecations into her crystal ball (in a scene more reminiscent of the *Ends Court* Road than mysterious Egypt). The rest of the cast half and put off over their moribund lines, and the plot contains no surprises."

However, *Film and Filming's* Richard Davis received the film rather more charitably. Volume 13, number 11, August 1967: "If we must have more mummy's shrouds, this one is as good as any, and better than most." He found Gilling's script "amusing, and directed with style, thus perpetuating the argument in favour of the writer-director." Catherine Lacey was again singled out for her "dazzlingly virtuoso performance, complete with foaming lips," and he drew particular attention to Chris Barnes's sharp editing.

"One eternally valid precept which the Hammer people have learnt at last is the increased effectiveness of horror which is implied but not stated. Thus the murder of the Andre Morell character is particularly well cut. We never see it, and the horror of the scene goes immeasurably, because we see bits of the top of his - mutilated - head, we hear the sound track, and imagine the rest from the reactions of those who discover the body . . . Here the mummy is a little too strong-wired and thick-skinned - too much like *Odjoko* or someone. Still, *Smerek* could go to Ancient Egypt for new recruits; James Bond meets the Mummy? No, ham, I suppose it's only a matter of time."



DANS LES GRIFFES DE LA MOMIE

COAuteurs: PAUL DE LUDS

MANUEL D'EXPLOITATION

1967-1968



DER FLUCH DER MUMIE

Critique

Even among Hammer enthusiasts, *The Mummy's Shroud* is not a well-regarded film. It's true that the hackneyed 'avenging mummy' plot is given to us straight, unadorned with any of the colourful elaborations that partially enlivened Hammer's previous entry, *The Curse of the Mummy's Tomb* (1964). But director John Gilling brings all his characteristic visual flair to the hirsutous subject matter and when there are lesser productions bearing the Hammer name, it seems churlish to vilify a film as unassuming and modestly effective as *The Mummy's Shroud*.

The film's regrettable features are easily enumerated. A good eight minutes are irrelevantly spent, before the credits even roll, recounting the legend of Kiah-to-Bey. Not only are these scenes accompanied by a seemingly interminable narration, they are also a classic case of Hammer attempting to stage events which the budget simply cannot encompass. The time would have been more profitably spent on Sir Basil's spell in the Mezera asylum, which as the film stands, is clumsily consigned to reported speech.

The hero and heroine are not at all suggestive of 1920 and the latter gives such a strange performance one is unsure whether she's cleverly depicting a woman overburdened by her clairvoyant powers or whether she's simply concentrating on hitting her marks and remembering her lines. Roger Delgado, on the other hand, seems to know exactly what he's up to but overdoes it to a maniacal degree. And Hazzard's unlimited access to the museum strains credulity to breaking point, as does that establishment's lax attitude towards the upkeep of its exhibits - with hardly a glass case in sight and cleaners making free with feather dusters over priceless artefacts.

But compensations aren't hard to find either. There are beautifully layered performances from Michael Ripper and Elizabeth Sellars, a powerful one from John Phillips and a brilliantly outrageous one from Catherine Lacey, who was simultaneously contributing a truly terrifying turn to Michael Reeves's *The Sorcerers*. There's a particularly stylish-looking mummy - though one wishes the zipper down his back wasn't visible in the climactic scenes - and it's also nice to

see an ordinary class of mummy for a change, they're generally high priests or princes. Above all there are the murder sequences, which are briskly and brutally staged and which work inventive variations on the classic 'he's behind you!' routine.

A succession of visual conceits - with Prem reflected in a crystal ball for Sir Basil, in developing fluid for Harry and only hazily visible to the myopic Longbarrow - succeed in making an unusually solid and brutal mummy into an almost onerous figure, the embodied conscience of his victims. Though the script originally called for Preston also to see Prem as

a reflection, the finished film wisely has him not see the mummy at all - after all the insouciant 'unseeing' Preston has no conscience. His death though seems curiously lenient after the elaborate sadism lavished on the others. Sir Basil's murder, in particular, is positively disturbing. As the camera takes an ominous tour of the grim ornamentation of Hatt's den, Prem makes his entrance deep in the background and a lurid light simultaneously picks out a grinning

skull in the foreground - a particularly apt memento mori since Sir Basil's own skull is about to be crushed to a pulp. André Morell's moving portrayal of Sir Basil's utter helplessness and despair, supplemented by a revelingly evocative soundtrack and a long-held close-up of Hatt's

Above all there are the murder sequences, which are briskly and brutally staged and which work inventive variations on the classic 'he's behind you!' routine.



amused and contented gaze, produces an unforgettable effect.

The closing scenes bring the interesting, if slightly confusing, revelation that Hatt is not so implacable after all. Confronted with Claire, she offers her - perhaps out of a kind of sisterly feeling among clairvoyants - the chance of a reprieve. All these female characters in fact seem to have some loom of second sight, looking serene and composed beside their frenetic and visually impaired menfolk. This intriguing twist on the old theme of 'female intuition' is finally left hanging, but was to be picked up five years later in Seth Holt's beguiling *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb*, in which a visionary female character takes centre stage and the masculine bonded overager is, perhaps not before time, removed from the picture altogether...

Classic Scene



"I see death . . ."

The Mummy's Shroud (1967)
Screenplay by John Gilling

On the run from the police after escaping from Mezzera's lunatic asylum, cursed archaeologist Sir Basil Walden (Andre Morell) is lured into the home of the mystic Haiti (Catherine Lacey) and her son, the Keeper of the Tomb, Hasmid Ali (Roger Delgado). Haiti consults her crystal ball for an indication of Sir Basil's eventual fate . . .

HAITI: You are Sir Basil Walden. I am Haiti. I tell your fortune. Haiti, the greatest fortune-teller in the whole of Egypt. I look into the crystal - so . . .

She looks into the crystal and cackles with delight.

HAITI: I see death. You are going to die very soon - but not the way you think.

SIR BASIL: Let me rest, please . . . give me somewhere to rest.

HAITI: You will soon be dead. Then you can rest. Death can be sweet. Sweet death . . . I pray for it because I am old and tired. You pray because you are sick. There is nothing left for you but death.

A figure emerges from behind a veiled alcove.

HAITI: My son, Hasmid.

SIR BASIL: Your son?

HAITI: He will tell you.

HASMID: The Spirit of the Tomb will journey from death into life. He will punish you for what you have done, and one by one the others will follow you.

HAITI: It is in the crystal.

SIR BASIL: Help me, please . . .

HAITI: It is in the crystal. Soon the Spirit will move. I can see him now. He is dead, but he has the power to move - and kill . . .



The Mummy's Shroud

compiled by
Alan Barnes - *The Story, Its Production,
The Script, Casting, Shooting, On Release, Comment
and Classic Scene*
Jonathan Rigby - *The Characters and Critique*





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The Man in Black-and-White

Relatively little is known about the early days of Exclusive/Hammer's post-war production. Francis Searle, one of the company's most important directors from this time, shares some memories and a few sherberts with Jonathan Rigby...

"Where Hammer is concerned, you must remember that I'm a good ten years older than Tony Hinds, Jimmy Sangster and the rest, so I was never quite in their bell game. I mean, I'm 83, 84 now... " Reminded that he's listed in reference books as having been born in 1909, Francis Searle thinks for a moment, then laughs. "Oh, that's 86 then, isn't it? Bloody hell, that's right."

Apart from a certain imprecision regarding his age, Francis Searle is as sharp, spry and charming an octogenarian as you could wish to meet. Born in Putney, he first worked as a dog's body for his uncle's plaster-decorating firm. Refurbishing some of our London's picture palaces provided a strong imaginative stimulus. "That's where I got the bug, I suppose. I certainly wasn't keen on following my father and brother into dentistry." After spells as an analytical chemist for the Columbia Gramophonic Co. and as a dance band drummer, he joined the repertory company at Bexhill Pavilion. "Another dog's body, of course - doing posters, going on stage occasionally, a hundred and one things. But it was the smell of the thing - like being in a film studio - and once it's there you're hooked. Some of the actors I met there I employed later on -

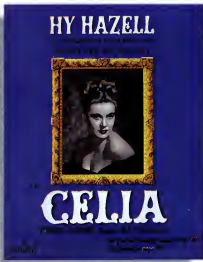
Michael Ripper, for instance, whom I put into Hammer's *A Case for PC 49*. Later - dissatisfied with the organ interludes in cinemas - I dreamt up something called *Scenes in Harmony*. "These were visual interpretations of passages of classical music - I even got paid for most of them" - and this led in 1935 to a position as set dresser, prop buyer, editor and assistant director at Highbury Studios. "That was my first 'inside job' as it were, and in 1937 I joined Gaumont British and inherited the *Ace Cinemagazine* series from Andrew Buchanan."

Scores of advertising, educational and documentary films followed, some of which, like *Wor Without End*, *Student Nurse* and *Sports Day*, made a sizeable impact. In the latter, Searle gave an early break to the teenage Jean Simmons: "a sparkling little personality sent to me by the Aida Foster agency. Sydney Box had seen *Student Nurse* at the Dominion and in 1946 - my big break! - asked me over to Riverside Studios to direct *A Girl in a Million* with Hugh Williams and the lovely Joan Greenwood. After that I was asked by James Carter - art director for Sidney Box - to do *Things Happen at Night*, an adaptation of the stage farce *The Pottersgate*." It wasn't long before the newly-formed Exclusive sought him out...

"I don't know how Jim Carreras and Tony Hinds got hold of me - they'd seen my pictures, I suppose. I was invited to meet them at the Albany which was my club at the time. Prior to that they'd used Godfrey Grayson: we alternated for a while. The first one I did for them - and this was where we went into the new technique of shooting entirely in country houses - was *Colto*. This was during Exclusive's stay at Dial Close in Cookham Dean - a big old house set in lovely grounds. The script was by a chum of Jim's called Colonel Rawlinson... How

the hell do I remember all these names...? We had to re-write it with the knowledge of what rooms we had available. There was a lot of what I call 'carpentry' - adjusting to the circumstances. It was great fun really: jolly hard work but very rewarding. It was a marvellous school for the artists, for everybody really, because you had to make do with every damned thing and think on your feet."

"He was a great salesman, was Jim, bit of a villain but I loved him. He was kind and sociable and that's why he was such a success."



Starting in *Celia* was the late Hy Hazell (born Hyacinth Hazel O'Higgins), who stands at the head of what subsequently became known as 'Hammer glamour'. 'Hy was an Associated British girl. [In, in those days, was dealing with ABC a lot - he was very friendly with them. I can imagine how it went, no doubt over a few sherbets. He'd go to them with a subject and say, 'Who've you got, and how much?' He was a great salesman, was Jim, but of a villain but I loved him. He was kind and sociable and that's why he was such a success. He very seldom came into the studio - he didn't want to get involved so long as the stuff on the screen looked all right. But he had charisma, a great personality. Tony Hinds didn't interfere either. He was very sympathetic - a clever bloke and very easy to work with. He was particularly good at vetting scripts and so on. Mind you, I was very surprised when I heard through the grapevine that he'd turned to scripting himself. Similarly with Jimmy Sangster, who became a writer of some consequence. He was my teenboy at first and eventually became my first assistant. He married Exclusive's hair dresser Monica Hustler, didn't he? First marriage, anyway. He was a nice bloke, too.'

Exclusive's spell at Dial Close was not entirely welcome to local residents. 'Yes, we caused a bit of a stir at Cookham Dean. We weren't very popular. In fact, I only did that one film at Dial Close; Tony had found Oakley Court by then and, before the whole operation shifted over to Down Place, we'd also use the big room there from time to time. You couldn't fly anything so the most difficult part was finding sufficient settings to keep the picture



A tea-break discussion at Oakley Court during production of 1960's *The Lady Craved Excitement*. From left to right: sound mixer Edgar Wether, sound camera operator Gordon Everett, first assistant Jimmy Sangster, second assistant Bill Stone, courtesy Piero Glynn, hairdresser Monica Hustler, camera operator Peter Bryan, assistant cameraman Jack Howard, lighting cameraman Jimmy Harvey, boom operator Percy Bellan, actress Thelma Girdle, director Francis Bourke and actors Michael Madson and Celia Green

moving, otherwise it'd become a bore. I couldn't bear people just standing about spouting dialogue, as if it were a play. I'd start by marking all the action out - an idea I pinched from Val Guest! - and that tended to be a great help to the technical crew. In those circumstances - working in confined spaces trying to make something that cost nothing look like a hundred dollars - a director couldn't go around shouting and blaspheming and having his bloody arms about. You really had to nurse the artists along. You can get cooperation without recourse to abuse, which unhappily was at one time a hallmark of film directors. And so as not to meet up cold on the set, we had read-throughs for the artists at Hammer House [the company's headquarters in Wardour Street, London]. You had to instill a feeling of professionalism into the thing, rather than having people just walk into rooms at Cookham or at Bury and say to themselves, 'Oh Christ - is this a picture or what?' Sometimes the read-throughs were very useful: if somebody turned out not to be right, I'd change the artist.

'Well, after *Celia* I suppose I was judged satisfactory and I was kept on for three years. Then, of course, there was a run of *The Man in Black*, *Someone at the Door*, *The Lady Craved Excitement*... Mike Medwin - lovely fellow



Hy Hazell alongside Michael Madson along in *The Lady Craved Excitement*.





Above: Victor Loring as Ford in 1951's *Whispering Smith*
 With London



Exclusive Use Ballroom For Musical Scenes

SHOOTING commences on Monday at the Hotel de Paris, Bray, when *Exclusive* begins their current production, "The Lady Craved Excitement," co-starring Hy Hazell and Michael Medwin. The main ballroom of the Hotel is being used as Carlo's Club and will be the scene of revelry by night, as is usual with cabaret clubs of this type.

Carrying goods to Newcastle will be the construction crew who are transporting a pre-fabricated bar from Oakley Court Studio, where it was built, to the Hotel de Paris Ballroom, where it will be put to practical use to give the authentic club atmosphere.

During the four days there the Unit will be shooting, the story introduction and all musical numbers will be covered.

Well remembered for his work with the B.B.C. during the war, Jimmy Dysonforth has written special lyrics for the musical numbers. On Monday these will be recorded and discs cut for the playback. The music will be provided by the Melodrama Orchestra.

Director Francis Searle is now in the final stages of pre-planning and will have the same talented Unit with whom he worked on "Someone At the Door." Screenplay is by John Gilling, Francis Searle and also Edward J. Mason who was responsible for the radio series.

The Cinema, 1950

— was in those last two. Another regular of mine was Sid James. We became great buddies I remember getting him out of trouble one day when he had a raging toothache. We were out together so I took him to my brother at Putney and got him to see to it!"

The *Lady Craved Excitement* also marked the Hammer debut of Andrew Ken. "He was the one with the beard wasn't he? He was fine. He had his beard pulled by Hy Hazell in the

cabaret sequence, I remember. This was at the time when I was living down at the studio. I was using the Hotel de Paris in Bray quite a bit and I thought, 'I wonder if I can persuade them to let me use their ballroom for the cabaret scenes?' Which I did — it gave enormous production value to the picture because I wasn't normally allowed to build anything except within the confines of the rooms available. A couple of flats and a door and a few pictures and there was your set!"

Searle finished 1950 with *The Rosseter Case*, which featured another regular in Sheila Burrell. "She played darts in that with the young Stanley Baker. He was on fifteen quid a day at that stage — the going rate!" Baker also turned up briefly (delivering the milk) in *Cloudburst*, which saw Searle entrusted with the first in *Exclusive's* ambitious package of more high-profile projects with imported Hollywood stars in the lead. Robert Preston was the first such import; Richard Carlson in *Whispering Smith* hits London, the second. *Cloudburst* also marked the beginning of Hammer's famous tenure of Bray Studios. "Oh, *Down Piece* was marvellous. When we first went there it was a store for an army kit — bloody near breaking down the ceiling, in fact. George Davis was the owner, a very big name in Aspro and very fond of his Duzo. God, we never left the damned place sober! As a matter of fact, I lived there for two years which was very convenient. I'd get out of bed, go on the set give the set-up and then go back for breakfast!"

Searle's next Hammer project, however, was filmed not at Bray but in Manchester. "John Blakely and Jimmy Brennan of the Manchester Studios did a deal with Jim on *Never Look Back*. We had the entire *Dod Bailey* set in that. It came up from Denham on three low-loaders I think, and it was a bastard to shoot into



"John Baskley and Jimmy Browne at the Winchester Studios did a deal with Jim de Haven Look Back. He had the entire Old Dossy set in that."

because of all the different eye-lines. Mind you, Connie Willis – one of the ace continuity girls at that time – was a great help on that one. It was Tony Nelson Keys's first Hammer assignment, in fact. Hammer were after a production manager so I asked Tony if he'd like to do it. That was a nice picture – I don't mind that one!"

Searle's final credit for Hammer came in 1956 with the short subject, *Day of Grace*, in which Hammer regular George Woodbridge had a leading rôle. "George was a lovely character. I'd read a little story in *Argosy* – real old sob stuff. Jim liked it too so off I went. George, who lived at Staines but whose family were based in Exeter, found this lovely farmhouse at Barnstaple. Very good surroundings, but there was a bloody great hill to get up – I'd forgotten I had to get the generator up there! This was when we entered into the period of what they laughingly called *Hammscope*. It had been cobbled together by George Hill, the king of camera gear in Wardour Street, but oh dear oh dear, talk about string and elastic! We put *Hammscope* into this poky farmhouse and we thought, 'Christ, where do we put the lights and the microphones!'"

But we got round it somehow and all went well – until it broke down altogether. For the last couple of days I was left with one lens – a 50mm lens, if you please. It was bloody murder. Fortunately I'd done my interior shots, the big scenic stuff, already. But the film went on at the Pavilion and was quite a success . . ."

By this time, of course, Hammer had turned their attention to Gothic horror under the direction of Searle's friend Terence Fisher. "Dear old Terry . . . The japs we've had together! He virtually took over when I poked up with Jim Carreras. When the horror films came along it was a different ball game, you see. I didn't go for it at all. A lot of the so-called horror things were so bloody shallow, I

really couldn't enthuse. Technically they were bloody good – they just weren't my cup of tea. The early ones were certainly impressive – I don't know if later they cut their budgets or what. The usual story: you get started and then you have two or three days cut off and you still have to pound away at it. Very unfair. They wouldn't ever give the creative side much of a chance."

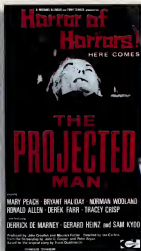
Between making *The Curse of Frankenstein* and *Dracula* for Hammer, Terence Fisher had teamed up with Searle to form Delta Films. "I'd been doing a couple of things for Douglas Fairbanks Presents. The young Christopher Lee was in one of them, I recall. Terry did a few of those too – in fact, we all had a go! We had a

subject called *Kill Me Tomorrow*, which I quite liked, and we got Pat O'Brien for the lead. Terry was directing and I produced, though I had to direct all the location work. Terry, the old bugger, didn't like that side of it; he liked to be all cosy sitting in his chair. So I was left with all the airport stuff. I was a bit unlucky there!"

Kill Me Tomorrow also featured a couple of imaginative casting choices. "I was persuaded, I don't know by whom – I expect I was in my cups or something – to cast the bloke Freddie Mills, forgetting that Pat O'Brien was supposed to knock him out! Terry said 'What the bloody hell have you done here mate?' He got round it though. A happier choice came about because Terry and I used to go to a club in Swallow Street. One night there was this teenage character prancing round on the stage and since there was a juke-box sequence, Terry turned to me and said, 'Well what about him?' That was Tommy Steele's first break."

Searle maintained contact with Fisher over the years. "As a matter of fact, I went to his funeral and apart from family, Tony Hinds and John Redway – Terry's agent – we were the only other

"When the horror films came along it was a different ball game, you see. I didn't go for it at all. A lot of the so-called horror things were so bloody shallow, I really couldn't enthuse."



people there. Oh, and Thorley Walters. It was a bit sad really."

Searle's remaining week in second features was decorated with appearances by Hammer names like Barbara Shelley (*Murder at Site 3*), Robert Urquhart, Vera Day and Hy Hazell (*Ticket to Paradise*), Colin Tapley (*Emergency*), Carol White (*Gasbreak*), and William Lucas (*The Marked One*). "By the sixties the second feature market was drawing to its end so I had this idea for a series of half-hour comedy shorts, all of which had a circuit release. Barbara Mullen was in the first one, *Miss MacTaggart Won't Lie Down*; the next one was *Talk of the Devil*

with Suzan Farmer and the late Tim Barrett, a light comedian in the Medwyn mould. There were six in all, I think. We had ten days on each and I had to make them for 12 or 13,000 quid – not a lot of money even then. I don't know how the hell we did it, I really don't, because they had to have, if not quite the standard of a first feature, they had to have that look about them. Same as shooting in the houses for *Exclusive* – they had to have a 'look'."

Before the shorts and despite his former qualms, Searle had almost ventured into the horror genre. A script by old Hammer colleague Peter Bryan came his way. "The finance for *The Projected Man* was nearly

there and we'd even begun building sets at Shepperton when, at the last minute, a major investor pulled out. Several years later I had a call from a chap at Film Finances and was presented with the script and, if you please, my own bloody budget for it. I was asked to produce, but they wanted to use a brand new director and make it at a very small studio, Merion Park. I wasn't happy with that so I was dropped. I didn't like the end product much – it didn't have the terror in it that I wanted. I still have my original drawings of the man's distorted face. But that's just the business. It was just one that didn't come off. If you're an independent, you have to do so much work before any money comes up, and quite often you sweat yourself silly for nothing."

Thankfully, the same couldn't be said for his pioneering work at *Exclusive*, which helped lay a formidable foundation for the company's subsequent success.

Filmography

- 1946 *A Girl in a Million* *
- 1947 *Things Happen at Night* *
- 1949 *Celia* * †; *The Man in Black* * †; *Someone at the Door* * †
- 1950 *The Lady Craved Excitement* * †; *The Rissater Case* * †
- 1951 *Cloudburst* * †; *A Case for PC 49* * †; *Whispering Smith Hits London* * †
- 1952 *Never Look Back* * †; *Love's a Luxury* * †; *Double Identity* * †; *Buildup Drummond* *
- 1953 *Murder at Jam* *; *Wheel of Fate* * †
- 1954 *Profile* *; *A Yank in Ermine*; associate †
- 1955 *Stolen Assignment* †; *One Way Out* *
- 1956 *The Gelmater Gang* *; *Day of Grace* * †
- 1957 *Kill Me Tomorrow* co. *, †; *Undercover Girl* *
- 1958 *Murder at Site 3* * †; *Music with Max Jaffa* *
- 1960 *Trouble with Eve* * †; *Ticket to Paradise* * †
- 1961 *Freedom to Die* *
- 1962 *Emergency* *; *Gasbreak* * †; *Dead Man's Evidence* * †; *Night of the Promiser* *
- 1963 *The Marked One* *
- 1966 *Miss MacTaggart Won't Lie Down* * †
- 1968 *Talk of the Devil* * †; *Gold is Where You Find It* * †
- 1969 *The Pale Faced Girl* * †; *It All Goes to Show* * †
- 1970 *A Hole Lot of Trouble* * †
- 1971 *A Couple of Beauties* * †

* director

† co-writer

♦ producer

coloured type indicates a Hammer film



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Early Hammer The Story



Continuing our examinations of films from the Hammer/Exclusive canon, Jonathan Rigby looks at 1951's *Cloudburst*.

John Graham
Carol Graham
Inspector Davis
Lorna Dawson
Mickie Fraser
Peggy
Jackie
Sergeant Ritchie
Chuck Peters
Mrs. Reese
Kate
Johnson
Carrie
Milman
Desk Sergeant

Robert Preston
Elizabeth Sellars
Colin Tapley
Sheila Burrell
Harold Lang
Mervyn Gurnea
Thomas Heathcote
Georgie Woodbridge
Lyle Evans
Edith Sloope
Daphne Anderson
Nora Bowkell
Robert Emmet
Stanley Baker
Martin Rodella

Screenplay
 Leo Marks, Francis Searle
 from an original story by
 Leo Marks

Music composed by
 Director of Photography
Camera Operator
Editor
Make-up
Barber
Casting
Assistant Director
Producer
Director

Frank Spencer
Walter Harvey
Peter Bryen
John Ferris
Phil Leakey
Edgar Heller
Michael Carreras
Jimmy Sangster
Anthony Hinds
Francis Searle

Distributed by Exclusive (GB), United Artists® (USA)
 ©1951 Hammer Master presentation
 Certificate "A"
 Length 8, 281 feet
 Duration 92 minutes (GB), 93 minutes (USA)

In 1946, John Graham, formerly a colonel in the Resistance movement and now head of the Foreign Office's cipher section, owes his life to his pregnant wife Carol, who worked alongside him during the War. One night in a country lane, Carol is run down by a speeding Buick. John struggles with its occupants – Mickie and Lorna, who are on the run from a robbery and murder in Windsor – and in his eagerness to escape, Mickie reverses over Carol's body. John enlists the aid of former Commando friends to trace ex-boyfriend Mickie. Having tortured Lorna's Auntie out of him, John runs Mickie down and reverses over his body. The police recover a clue in the form of a sentimental coded shopping list, which is referred to John himself for decoding. Inspector Davis is quickly convinced of John's guilt but unable to arrest him for lack of hard evidence. Having tricked Lorna out of a police car and run her down, as he did Mickie, John is about to take a suicide pill when Davis restrains him. He goes quietly.

Background

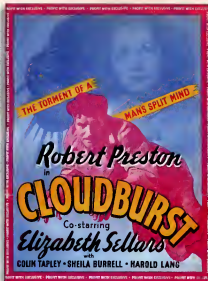
Cloudburst started life as a play by Leo Marks which I'd seen at the Richmond Theatre and liked a lot," recalls director Francis Searle. "We got the go-ahead from Jim Carreras to do a script and because Leo had never done a screenplay before, he and I hashed the thing out between us at my flat in Thayer Street. I had the foreknowledge of where it was to be shot so I knew the limitations we had to budget for. Now, Jim at that time was just embarking on his tie-in with American interests."

James Carreras's associate in America, Alexander Paul, liked the script, and a deal was duly set up with Exclusive. For a time though, the protagonist's attempted suicide seriously offended Stateside sensibilities. "I don't know how that was resolved," admits Searle. "We just went ahead and shot it." This disagreement probably accounts in part for the nine minute discrepancy between the American and British running times of the completed film.



From left to right: star Robert Preston, writer Leo Marks, director Francis Searle and Alexander Paul

"When *Cloudburst* was finally accepted," Searle remembers, "I was called in by Jim and asked if I knew Robert Preston. I said 'Of course I do. Bides round on homes, shooting everybody.' Well," said Jim, "you've got him." Long pause... "You'll love him – You've got to!" And as a matter of fact, I did – he was great. He was given a lavish reception at the Savoy and later on Leo and I would go up to his suite there, and Leo would get the blackboards out and teach



"That was my bloody motor car, the white one!"

The five-week shoot began on 8th January 1951, and the script's emphasis on road accidents necessitated not only Hammer's first attempt at back projection but also, according to the director, a cost-conscious approach to car hire. "That was my bloody motor car, the white one! They wanted a good-looking car, and mine was the best – also the cheapest. It was a lovely Vauxhall drop-dead coupe. What we used to call the Flying Banana. One day I went out to the car and they'd taken the bloody windscreen out. They'd cannibalised my car for the sake of the so-called back projection, which was done in an upstairs bedroom with the film projector charming out the background from the next room. But all was well in the end, and I expect I got a tanner for my trouble."

The supporting cast included 27-year-old Scots actress Elizabeth Sellars, whose only other Hammer credit was *The Mummy's Shroud* – coincidentally the last film Hammer made at Bray whereas *Cloudburst* had been the first. Sellars remembers Francis Searle being very supportive – "especially when I was run over in the pouring rain!" Second female lead Mary Gemmaire, an American choice and not approved by the director. New Zealand born actor Colin Tapley had just returned from fifteen years in Hollywood, eleven years on he would be re-united with *Cloudburst* crooks Sheila Burrell and Harold Lang in Hammer's *Paranoid*. Lang, a familiar face in British cinema's underworld, died in Egypt in 1971 and is fondly remembered by Hammer fans as the dubious character horribly liquidated in a hospital elevator in *The Quatermass Experiment*.

On the film's appearance in July 1951, *Pictograph* drew attention to "restrained, sincere work by Robert Preston [which] is given excellent support by Colin Tapley . . . while Elizabeth Sellars introduces considerable charm during her brief appearance," and characterised the whole as a "sombre British melodrama." *Kinema*graph Weekly called it a "First-rate British attraction [which] evenly balances fabulous rough stuff with touching emotionalism . . . There is nothing 'four walls' about *Cloudburst*, it keeps well on the move and stages its spectacular homicidal highspots in the open." Originally to have been distributed in the US by Eagle Lion Classics, the film was taken over by United Artists and trade-shown in New York in January 1952. "There is a familiar one," missed *Variety*, "but this version has sufficient variations to help balance off the tinniness of the basic plot . . . Story is slow in getting underway, but once the groundwork is established the script develops ample suspense. Preston's portrayal of the wrecker is a finely restrained one."

If the four-word review in *Monthly Film Bulletin* – "Violent and implausible thriller" – had a whiff of condescension about it, infinitely worse was in store for screenwriter Leo Marks when he created focus puller Mark Lewis, a character who makes John Graham's complexities seem run-of-the-mill. This, of course, was in Michael Powell's extraordinary *Popping Tom*.

Critique

Before *Winner, Bresson* and *Death Wish* there came Searle, Preston and *Cloudburst*. Glib as this observation might seem, there's no mistaking a vein of brutality and sadism in *Cloudburst*, struggling for expression behind the familiar facade of cosy post-war Englishness. The film tells a particularly cruel story and garnishes it with some unexpectedly nasty details.

John Graham is a highly unusual hero, for a start. Even before his fateful

him coding and all that Leo had been very high up in coding analysis at Baker Street during the war, you see."

For his part Preston considered the rôle of John Graham "as good as anything I've had." His first glimpse of Bray Studios came as something of a shock, however, as Searle vividly recalls: "It was left to me to take him over to Down Place. We arrived at the studio and he seemed a bit subdued, so I said 'Well Bob, here we are – this is it.' He said, 'I'm in this the prop department,' and I said, 'No mate, this is the studio!' After the initial shock, Pichenger reported that Preston was "fiddled by the studio out Windsor way . . . Why build phoney interiors in a studio when you can film the real thing?" he asked. "It's different and refreshing after Hollywood. I wouldn't have missed it."

Trevor Howard had been top of Searle's list of likely John Gabriels. "That was who Nora Roberts and I had in mind. Nora did all the casting on these pictures, by the way – never mind what it says on the credits. But I thought Bob put in a good performance. I thought, once we'd slowed down his delivery a bit. It was Alex Paul who brought Bob over, though the pair of them didn't get on in the slightest. Paul was on the set quite a lot and, having been a stills man in America, proved to be a bit of a thorn in the side to any lighting cameraman Jimmy Hervey." Despite such friction, the unit was a close-knit one: an in-joke in the finished film testifies to this. A blackboard in Graham's coding headquarters is nuzzled with names like Searle . . . Sangster . . . Bryan . . . Paul . . . Hammer . . .



Graham's coding headquarters, with its cheery blackboard



From left to right:
Mary Gemma
Robert Preston
and Elizabeth
Sellers

encounter with Lorna and Mickie a visiting dignitary looking over Graham's work at the cipher section observes that he needs some rest and that "your work's driven you batty." His war experiences have clearly left him disillusioned, to put it mildly, yet the force of this is demolished by making the character a Canadian. Graham's gallows humour is mordant and quietly subversive in a peculiarly English way – and Robert Preston can't quite catch the tone, allowing some of Graham's most revealing statements to go for almost nothing. What he conveys very well though – once kitted out in avenging trench-coat and trilby – is Graham's unwavering dedication to his own brand of vigilante justice. He permits himself a few moments of moral confession nonetheless, particularly in some tense encounters with Inspector Davis built along classic 'cat and mouse' lines. Here, with urbane investigator quizzing equally urbane suspect, the Inspector states the film's awkward theme as boldly as possible: "You've broken so many codes, you shouldn't have broken

the moral code too. You've done wrong and you know it. It's our job to catch those people; it's our job to punish them. It's our job now to punish you."

Davis himself, mind you, is hardly your standard-issue police inspector, being more in the tradition of the gentleman-amateur. Colin Tapley's supremely civilised performance makes the most of the script's wittiest lines. Other characters too, are gradually revealed to have unexpected agendas of their own. Graham's sister-in-law Peggy pulses profusely with unrequited passion to the young widower, while ex-Commando Jackie, in his adoration of his former boss, seems to have taken wartime 'mole-bonding' more literally than the film could express in 1951.

Director Francis Searle permits himself a leisurely twenty-five minutes before getting to the meat of the story. These opening scenes, which are frankly sluggish, at least have Elizabeth Sellers in them, introduced to us – appropriately enough for the wife of a cipher expert – while absorbed in a crossword puzzle. She gives a surprising degree of conviction to the clumsy but crucial line – "My hatred would overwhelm me like a... cloudburst." Searle offers a number of luminous caressing close shots of her strangely beautiful face, and balances them later with a series of penetrating close-ups of Preston's granite features, rendered frighteningly implacable by tragedy.

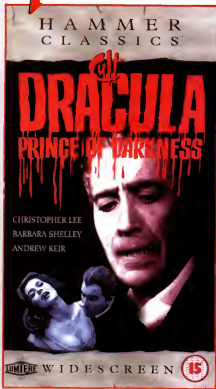
The tragedy itself – a series of violent shots paggedly intercut – is impressively and shockingly staged, but Graham's subsequent confrontation with Mickie Fraser is even nastier. As Mickie is tethered to a post with wire that slices his wrists as he struggles, every bead of sweat on his face and every curl of cigarette smoke from his nostrils is illuminated by a single swinging light bulb, until Graham hauls him away with a particularly grim old line: "I want to give you a driving lesson." None of the three fatal 'driving lesson' sequences are given to us graphically, though, instead, Graham is symbolically seen pushing a model car back and forth as he moodily contemplates his revenge. The final murder culminates in an almost comically outrageous tracking shot that hurtles, like the cat, into Lorna's hysterically screaming face.

Searle redeems his slow start with these surprisingly savage 'horridical highspots' and, as an uneasy fusion of genre English psycho-drama with hard-boiled American revenge thriller, *Cloudburst* remains curiously compelling.

✚

Tapes from the Tomb

Andy Black
peruses the latest
horror video releases.



DRACULA PRINCE OF DARKNESS

Lumiere Video

Self-through release 27th February

The official sequel to Hammer's seminal 1958 *Dracula* – if you'll excuse the sublime and invigilating *The Brides of Dracula* (1960), *Dracula Prince of Darkness* sees Hammer's numero uno vampire reprise his rôle – albeit in a blissing, non-speaking performance which barely covers half the film's running time.

Disregarding the opening minutes which merely repeat *Dracula*'s climactic confrontation between the arch vampire and Van Helsing, Terence Fisher reinforces his rôle as Hammer's prime mover with this expertly crafted vampire feature. In much the same way that Jorge Grau's *The Living Dead at the Manchester Morgue* (1974) introduces a succession of seemingly minor but disquieting images, Fisher's film also accumulates a series of insinuating details, from the portentous warning uttered to a group of English travellers: Helen (Barbara Shelley), her husband Alan (Charles Tingwell), Charles (Francis Matthews) and his wife Diana (Susan Farmer) to on no account stray into the Carpathians to visit Castle Dracula, to

the eerie sight of a driverless carriage which immediately transports them to the said danger area.

Their arrival and subsequent reconnaissance of the opulent castle finds the dinner table set for four guests and their luggage deposited in the appropriate bedrooms with only the skulking servant Klove (Philip Latham) to greet them. This subtle opening is then graphically devastated by Klove's subsequent sacrifice of Alan – strung upside down and his jugular slashed, as the crimson liquid bleeds onto Dracula's ashes below – so resurrecting the Count.

From here on in, the remainder of the film concentrates on the efforts of Charles and the commanding Father Sander (Andrew Keir) to save both themselves and Helen and Diana from the vampire's fatal caresses – culminating with the inventive demise of Dracula – immersed in icy running water with his face frozen in an expression of death beneath the cold ice.

What Fisher excels in doing is building upon the intensely sexual appeal of *Dracula* suggested in his original film – here the entranced Helen is literally transformed from a frigid, starched figure into a voluptuous femme fatale – a low-cut dress and flowing locks replacing her hitherto firmly buttoned blouse and tied-back hair.

This brazen sexuality isn't confined to *Dracula*'s victims, but also his would-be assailants given the decidedly phallic and over-zealous manner in which Helen is later stalked, whilst being held down by a group of monks.

The contrast between good and evil, sexuality and puritanism is impressively blurred by Alan's death in what amounts to a ceremony of almost religious solemnity – as Klove performs a series of rituals in order to resuscitate his undead master in Fisher's inversion of the Christian crucifixion and resurrection.

Despite the formal absence of *Dracula*'s arch-nemesis Van Helsing, Keir more than compensates in a bravura performance, combining religious faith with an all-powerful display of physical and mental strength.

Although these graphic scenes perhaps grab the headlines and the viewer's attention through their immediacy, the real power in the film lies in Fisher's poetic sequences – the Count's revival from within a mist-shrouded coffin, his hand clasping the edge to signal his reanimation, and Klove's symbolic extinguishing of the four candles in the candelabra – a precursor to the subsequent attempts to snuff out four lives.

This film's release in a widescreen format, complete with its original trailer, only serves to further emphasise its impact as quintessential Hammer, quality horror and vintage Fisher.



HAMMER CLASSICS

ANDRÉ MORELLI



DAVID BUCK

JOHN PHILLIPS

THE MUMMY'S SHROUD



THE MUMMY'S SHROUD

Lumiere Video

Sell-through release 27th February

Although director John Gilling produced some superlative work for Hammer with the atmospheric *The Plague of the Zombies* (1966), *The Mummy's Shroud* (1967) is merely a competent, if unimaginative, addition to Hammer's cycle of mummy films which reached its apex with the comparative dynamism of *The Mummy* (1959) and the frisson of *Blood From the Mummy's Tomb* (1971). A solemn and lengthy prologue delineating ancient Egypt almost threatens to burst into some kind of sub-*Curry On* film antic before the story unfolds in the 1920s – expedition to desecrate Pharaoh's tomb – mummy's curse is invoked – expedition members meet gruesome deaths at the hands of avenging mummy – ancient rites read from precious scroll (or shroud as here) revoke curse – end.

Yes, it's the same tired, formulaic plot which has permeated countless mummy films, not unlike the pedantic pacing of the creature itself as it shuffles interminably from victim to victim.

This seemingly stilted threat, this lumbering presence, is a constraint which prevails throughout this particularly limited oeuvre save for the kinetic-paced but empty-headed thrills of the gratuitous exploitationer *Down of the Mummy* (1981).

"The spirit of the tomb will journey from death into life. He will punish you for what you have done and one by one the others will follow you" – or so intones the keeper of the tomb, Hassid Ali (Roger Delgado) to Sir Basil Walden (André Morell) after his expedition to discover the whereabouts of the mummified Kab-to-Bey. Sure enough, this portentous utterance soon begins to ring true as various expedition members meet untimely ends at the hands of the bandaged one, culminating with Walden's own demise amid the incandescent red and green hues of clairvoyant Hatti's (Catherine Lacey) spiritual lala.

Although such scenes are handled with customary assurance by Gilling it's the sub-plot involving the expeditions benefactor, the eccentric Stanley Preston (John Phillips) whose zeal for publicity, superstitious fear and selfish character traits are immediately at odds with Walden's heroism. In contrast we see Preston's wife and her cool-headedness and his son's willingness to endanger his own life in pursuit of the ancient killer. Eventually, Preston's repeated efforts to flee the carnage around him result in his own death whilst the others survive – fitting justice for such an unsympathetic figure.

In amongst the otherwise formulaic scenario Gilling does intrude some of the mummy's work with a certain gusto – his dispatch of the jittery Longbarrow (Michael Ripper), appropriately sees the helpless victim shrouded in bed linen before being violently thrown out of a top floor window to his death below. Other highlights include the climax which sees the mummy literally dissolve before our eyes – as the obligatory incarnation is read aloud – the mummy's bandaged form crumbling to skeletal dust, like the very sand it has been entombed in for so many thousands of centuries.

Not one of Hammer's most memorable horror entries then, although the long-awaited release of one of the company's least-seen films is certainly to be welcomed.

SEASON OF THE WITCH

Redemption Video

Sell-through release 24th March

Despite being very much a film for, and a product of, its time, combining feminism and black/white witchcraft of the seventies, George A Romero's intriguing *Season of the Witch* (1972) is a thoughtful essay in personal freedom and development.

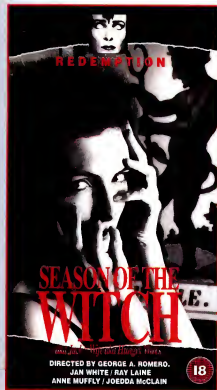
Joan Mitchell (Jan White) has reached a period of (menopausal?) crisis in her life. Taken for granted by her work-immersed husband and seemingly no longer required by her maturing daughter, Joan finds herself at both a personal and emotional crossroads. With time on her hands, and requiring physical and intellectual stimulation, Joan turns to a trendy young teacher Greg (Ray Laine) for the former and a local witch Marion (Virginia Greenwald) for the latter. "I'm nutty enough to believe there's something in it," Joan comments on her new-found interest.

Besides offering a revealing, if protracted, portrait of a bored and sexually-frustrated housewife and her attempts to combat this ennui, Romero's film also impressively articulates the series of hallucinatory nightmares culminating with her fatally shooting her husband Jack (Bill Thunhurst) when he returns early from a business trip one night.

By attempting, in effect, to denystify the beliefs and paraphernalia surrounding the Black Arts, Romero treats his subject matter in a prosaic manner – reducing witchcraft almost to the innocuous level of a ladies' Tupperware party, successfully inverting the premise of Roman Polanski's own witchcraft epic *Rosemary's Baby* (1968). In Romero's film witchcraft is seen as an avenue of escape for a lonely housewife and not an instrument of repression.

Working almost exclusively as a cerebral horror film Romero's work is a departure from the physical manifestations of horror which proliferate in his justly acclaimed zombie film trilogy, with perhaps the most horrific aspect being how one intelligent individual can become so alienated by her own social environment.

As one of Romero's own personal favourites amongst his work, *Season of the Witch* is perhaps best seen as being the precursor to



his similarly angst-ridden *Martin* (1976), which in turn seeks to demystify the vampire myth by also placing the creature within a contemporary urban environment.

Given the high-pressure lifestyles of the nineties and the inherent social constraints within society *Season of the Witch* has in many ways transcended its feminist/witchcraft pre-occupations from the seventies, via its championing of personal and intellectual freedom – as resonant in the nineties as at any other time.

The final images of Joan's initiation into the local coven are intercut with the prone, bloodied body of her husband and serve to reinforce the right of women to be the architects of their own destinies as opposed to merely being the lap-dogs of traditional male dominance – a point jarringly illustrated during one dream sequence as Joan is led on a collar and leash by her husband to a set of human dog kennels whilst he prepares to travel away on business. This is one lady who's definitely not for turning!

FUNNY MAN

Polygram Video

Rental release 15th March

Not just a British film, but a British horror film – an achievement in itself, *Funny Man* also boasts one of genre legend Christopher Lee's low horror film appearances in recent years.

A witty and inventive film, signs of promise are certainly shown from fledgling director Simon Sprackling, although Lee's

proclamation that the film possessed "the most original screenplay I've read in 22 years" was surely over-generous praise.

Lee's character loses his ancestral home in a poker game to a typically superficial record producer Max Taylor (Benay Young), who immediately makes the place his home with disastrous consequences. His wife Tina (Ingrid Drop the Dead Donkey Laacy) and their two precocious children quickly meet suitably grisly ends at the hands of the titular jester – the Funny Man (Tim James) – the joker in the pack and very much the wild card of this film.

The remainder of the film comprises of a series of macabre vignettes betraying a decidedly EC Comics-influenced strain of black humour as a succession of cartoonish characters meet with ironic deaths. The Psychic Commando, Pauline Black from the ska band The Selector, suffers from the Funny Man's own ectoplasmic materialisation – erupting from within her body a la 1986's *Demons*, the Crap Puppeteer (George Morton) is incinerated during one of his puppet shows, culminating with the grotesquely violent demise of the loutish Hard Man (Chris Walker) – a stiletto heel – lacerating his face as the Funny Man ensures he "gets the point" – until the bloody pulp's own ironic epitaph of "Point taken!" is uttered.

The Funny Man himself with his impish grin and fine line in trendy speak, rightly steals the show with Lee's appearance amounting to little more than a cameo. As for the film itself, it has a neat tone in depreciating humour and some original and outrageous set-pieces – check out the Funny Man's 'sultry' Marlene Dietrich impersonation as imagined by Russ Meyer, if you get my drift, but here also lies its main failing as its episodic structure somewhat dilutes the overall sum of these diverse parts.

Director Sprackling certainly appears to have a bright future as the film's haunting final frame confirms – showing the bloodstained figure of Max restrained to a chair in a church – a grotesque image filmed using oblique camera angles to produce a disorientating effect with surrealistic overtones.

Definite signs of promise here that the struggling British film industry may yet spread new shoots of recovery into a hitherto barren tundra.





Who Were

Kelth Dudley continues his biographies of key Hanna persons and
with a look at some of the company's most prolific directors.

ROY WARD BAKER

"I don't do things trivially. If a fellow is going to take a bloody great sword and heat it up in the fire and stick it on somebody's back, then that is what you see. It's not possible for me to do it in a superficial way."

— Roy Ward Baker

A Londoner born in 1916, Roy Baker began working for Gainsborough Pictures in 1934. He worked through a long apprenticeship, learning his trade in a variety of roles and locations, culminating in his producing films for service personnel in the Army Film Unit during the War.

In 1946, he joined the Rank Organisation. Early successes included *Morning Departure*, a war film starring John Mills and Richard Attenborough made in 1949. The film impressed a director at 20th Century Fox who gave Baker a three-year contract in Hollywood directing second feature projects including *Night Without Sleep* with Gary Merrill, *Inferno* with Robert Ryan and the more up-market *Don't Bother to Knock*, in which Marilyn Monroe co-starred with Richard Widmark.

Returning to England and Rank in 1953, his career really took off four years later when he directed the classic POW film *The One That Got Away*, the true story of the only German soldier to escape from English confinement during the War. In 1958 he made *A Night to Remember*, the classic retelling of the Titanic tragedy starring Kenneth More.

Further productions followed including *The Singer Not the Song*, which cast John Mills as a Catholic priest in Mexico tormented by a homosexual outlaw played by a leather-clad Dirk Bogarde. *Flame in the Streets*, *The Valiant and Two Left Feet* preceded stints as a television director on *The Saint*, *The Human Jungle* and *Gideon's Way* in the early sixties.

In 1967, ten years after the success of *Quatermass 2*, Hammer completed Nigel Kneale's trilogy with *Quatermass and the Pit*. Val Guest was unavailable to direct, so Baker (who by now had added the 'Ward' to his name) returned to cinema. *The Anniversary*, a black comedy adapted for the screen by Jimmy Sangster and starring Bette Davis followed in 1967. The original director, Alvin Rakoff, had left the project at Davis's insistence. Baker took over and got on well with the star, having become friends with her in Hollywood.

Moon Zero Two, a brave attempt by Michael Carreras to broaden Hammer's output to take in a science-fiction western, was Baker's next project for the company. It didn't prove to be one of his favourite films. "There were all sorts of things we couldn't do," he later said. "We never had the time, the money or the patience."

He remains similarly disparaging about his next assignment for



During production of *Moon Zero Two*, producer and scriptwriter Michael Carreras (left) consults director Roy Ward Baker.

Hammer – 1970's *Scars of Dracula*. Warner Brothers/Seven Arts had pulled out of backing the Hammer film so EMI stepped in on the proviso that budgets had to be cut. Despite this, Baker was able to realise a few new ideas; having *Dracula* crawling along the castle wall like a bat was perhaps the most striking.

In the same year's *The Vampire Lovers* Hammer depicted on-screen sex with undertones of lesbianism. Baker's professional handling of Tudor Gates's script nevertheless gave the film an air of respectability. The strong cast – which included Peter Cushing, Douglas Wilmer and George Cole – and bigger budget, backed by American International, pulled the production around the less experienced cast. This was Ingrid Pitt's first starring role and she gave a first-class performance.

The introduction of outside producers Brian Clemens and Albert Fennell (of *The Avengers* fame) resulted in the daring *Dr Jekyll & Sister Hyde*. Baker skillfully directed Clemens's script of Jack the Ripper-style murders, Burke and Hare – who in reality had never been to London – and the real twist of Jekyll turning into the stronger and more dominant Miss Hyde.

Baker's last film for Hammer was *The Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*. Kung-fu films from Chinese producers like the Shaw Brothers and Cathay Films were big business thanks to the charismatic Bruce Lee. This film's production was deeply problematic but despite the arguments, *7 Golden Vampires* – scripted and produced by Don Houghton in association with Vee King Shaw – was a dynamic action film with a new twist on the vampire legend.

Baker's other genre work included films for Milton Subotsky's *Amicus* – *Anytime*, *And Now the Screaming Starts* (both in 1972)

and *Vault of Horror* in 1973. It was for Subotsky that he made his last film to date, 1980's tongue-in-cheek *The Monster Club*.

His more recent television work has included episodes of *The Mindy*, *Danger UKX*, *Fairly Secret Army* and the acclaimed series *The Flame Trees of Thika*.



Hammer?

JOHN GILLING

"I think the films succeeded because for those days they were considered somewhat 'way out.'"

— John Gilling

John Gilling at work, and relaxing, during production of *The Plague of the Zombies* in autumn 1965.



intelligent adaptation of the Jack the Ripper story called *Room to Let*, based on Margery Allingham's BBC play.

Gilling's Hammer screenwriting continued with *The Lady Craved Excitement*, *Wings of Danger* (directed by Terence Fisher) and *Whispering Smith Hits London*. The last film, however, saw a rift develop between Gilling and Carreras who told the writer he'd never work for the company again.

Towards the end of the fifties, Gilling joined forces with producers Robert S. Baker and Monty Berman to form Triad Films, one of the few set-ups to offer Hammer any serious competition in the Gothic horror stakes. Perhaps the best-regarded Triad production was 1959's *The Flesh and the Fends*. This powerful film, which starred Peter Cushing as Dr Knox and George Rose and Donald Pleasence as bodysnatchers Burke and Hare, once more drew director Gilling to Hammer's attention.

He returned to Bray Studios in 1960 to direct *The Shadow of the Cat*, an atmospheric thriller about a cat that wreaks vengeance upon its mistress's killer. The film's production was sub-leased by Falcon Films, one of Hammer's subsidiaries, and crewed by Hammer staff.

Following 1962's *The Pirates of Blood River* Gilling re-established himself with the company, although possibly strained his relationship with star Christopher Lee. "Pirates, which was supposed to take place somewhere in the West Indies, was shot at Bray Studios and Black Park in Buckinghamshire," he recalled. "I don't think Chris Lee has ever forgiven me for having him wade the river. It was very cold that year."

1963's *The Scarlet Blade* ("my favourite action film") was followed by *The Brigand of Kandahar* (1965), both from his own scripts.

In 1964 Anthony Nelson Keys gave Gilling an original story submitted by J. Llewellyn Devine called *The Gorgon*. Although Gilling reworked it into one of his best scripts for Hammer, he felt the finished film, directed by Terence Fisher, was "quite abysmal".

1966 saw the release of the 'Cornish Classics': *The Plague of the Zombies* and *The Reptile* — two films directed with great class using original scripts by Peter Bryan and John Elder respectively. Gilling had complete script control and re-wrote the two features as he filmed them back-to-back.

John Gilling's last film for Hammer was 1967's *The Mummy's Shroud*, a modest killer-on-the-loose picture notable for being the last production Hammer mounted at Bray.

Gilling emigrated to Spain in 1970, and after some time writing, travelling and painting came out of retirement to script and direct his final film, *La Cruz Del Diablo* (*The Devil's Cross*) in 1974. He died in Madrid on 22nd November 1984.



Born in 1912, John Gilling left school aged 15 and took work as a petrol company clerk. At 18 he travelled to America, taking various jobs — dish-washing and car-park attending included — until he finally broke into films as a bit-part actor and stuntman. He returned to England to work for his uncle as an assistant director, later serving as a sub-lieutenant in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1946.

Leaving the Navy, Gilling embarked on a writing career when he sold his first screenplay, *Black Memory*. More scripts followed before he directed his first film, *Escape from Broadmoor*, in 1947. He later directed and produced the last of Arthur Lucan's long-running *Old Mother Riley* films, *Old Mother Riley Meets the Vampire*. The film, which holds the distinction of being the first British vampire movie, was released in 1952 and also starred Bela Lugosi.

The first script Gilling submitted to Hammer was for a Dick Barton feature in 1950, but the project was shelved following the tragic death of star Don Sutherland. Gilling also turned in a screenplay based on a popular and long-running radio show: *The Man in Black*, which starred Valentine Dyall and Sydney James. Filmed at Oakley Court by director Francis Searle, Gilling's script was a *tour de force* of murder, insanity and terror, perhaps the first of Hammer's psychological thrillers. Another screenplay followed — an



The German press book for *The Reptile*.



An inextricable script conference during production of *The Shadow of the Cat* at Bray Studios. From left to right: Peter Jackson, producer Joe Pennington, director John Gilling and Andre Morell.

VAL GUEST

"Working for Hammer, you were working for real professionals and you always knew that what you expected to be on the set the following day was there. They got into a stride of working, they had it all down to the last nail."

— Val Guest



Born in 1911, Valmond Guest is one of Britain's most versatile and accomplished film-makers. On leaving school he decided to indulge his interest in cinema by becoming an actor. Warner Brothers signed him to a contract showing a confidence he did not share. He quit a few years later, "before anyone found out how bad I was."

Guest then pursued a career in writing, and as well as his freelance work became the London editor of a magazine called *The Hollywood Reporter*. He came a cropper dismissing one particular film with "If I

couldn't write a better picture than that with one hand tied behind my back I'd give up." The film's producer was Marcel Varnel, who challenged him to try just that. Picking up the gauntlet he went on to collaborate with Varnel on some of the classic British comedies of the thirties and forties. Highlights from his career during this period include the eight Will Hay films he co-scripted, beginning with 1936's *Windbag the Sailor* and including 1937's classic *Oh Mr Porter*.

Following Varnel's death in 1947, Guest continued directing

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successful British comedies. Indeed, his first venture for Hammer Films was the 1954 adaptation of the radio show *Life with the Lyons*, a brash comedy about an American family living in England. The film was a success. In 1956 Guest directed *The Lyons in Paris*. One year later the two films were cobbled together and re-cut to make 15-minute episodes for children's matinee consumers.

Guest next directed Hammer's very first colour productions, 1954's *Men of Sherwood Forest* and *Break in the Circle*, before helming *The Quatermass Experiment* (1955), at this stage the company's most important film. Although initially uninterested in tackling the project, the original BBC script proved to be tempting and along with Richard Landau, he adapted Nigel Kneale's original three-hour teleplay into an 82-minute feature. "If I was going to do it," he now remembers, "I was going to do it almost factually, as a newsreel or reportage. No science-fiction film had been done like that before." In 1957 he applied the same chilling verité approach to *Quatermass 2*, the impressive sequel.

Despite scoring a massive success with their own *The Curse of Frankenstein* in 1957, Hammer continued to produce television adaptations. As well as the *Quatermass* films they re-made *The*

Abominable Snowman, scripted by Nigel Kneale and based on his BBC teleplay *The Creature*. Guest directed this thoughtful story of the search for the legendary Yeti.

In 1958 Hammer departed from their increasingly successful Gothic horrors to depict another type of horror – Japanese war atrocities. *The Camp on Blood Island* was scripted by Joseph Mancip-White and directed by Guest. "The script hit me like a hammer," he later said. "I knew that this was one film I just had to make." The film opened in April 1958 – the same time as Guest's comedy *Up the Creek*. "This picture was one of Hammer's biggest money-makers" he recently recalled, "and at that time I was my own competition because *Up the Creek* was playing at the Warner Theatre while *The Camp on Blood Island* was at the London Pavilion at the same time. They were both blockbusters."

Terence Fisher had now become Hammer's premier Gothic director and Val Guest had emerged as the company's top action director, consolidating this in 1959 with the striking Yesterday's Enemy. Originally produced as a BBC television play in 1959, Yesterday's Enemy, written by Peter R. Newman, was a controversial production showing that British soldiers too were capable of committing atrocities. The film caused quite a stir on its initial release and now, 36 years later, still manages to shock.

In 1954 Guest wrote a screenplay about a Fleet Street reporter who discovers that the Americans and Russians have simultaneously exploded nuclear bombs, dislodging the world's axis and sending it hurtling towards the sun. *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* was rejected by just about every major film company. Eventually, in 1961, Guest and British Lion co-financed the film which proved to be one of the year's biggest money-spinners and winner of the British Academy Award for best picture.

Val Guest scripted and directed two more films for Hammer during this period, a crime-thriller starring Stanley Baker, *Hell is a City*, and a murder-thriller starring Claude Dauphin and Diane Cilento, *The Fall Treatment*.

Although it would be another eight years before he returned to Hammer with the Oscar-nominated *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth*, Val continued writing and directing films and television programmes. His work during this period included being one of the six directors of the 1967 James Bond spoof *Casino Royale*.

His later television work encompassed episodes of *Space: 1999*, *The Persuaders*, *The Return of the Saint* and *Shillingbury Towers* – a precursor to *Shillingbury Tales*.

Although he currently lives in Palm Springs California, Guest's name recently became associated with Hammer again when the company bought the rights to re-make *The Day the Earth Caught Fire*.

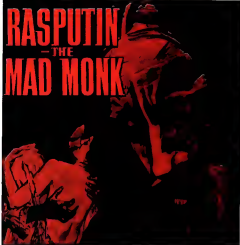


Today's Cinema, 1961.

Next month Who Were Hammer? looks at the careers of Don Sharp, Peter Sasdy and Seth Holt.

NEXT MONTH IN **Hammer** Horror

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR
DON SHARP



RASPUTIN—THE MAD MONK with **CHRISTOPHER LEE**
and starring **BARBARA SHELLEY · RICHARD PASCO · FRANCIS MATTHEWS · SUZAN FARMER**
Directed by DON SHARP. Produced by ARTHUR WELSH LTD. Screenplay by DON SHARP. Adaptation by DON SHARP. © 1968 HAMMER FILMS LTD.



**RASPUTIN -
NEITHER MAD
NOR A MONK?**

PLUS
THE MAKING OF
THE SORCERERS



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"RASPUTIN—THE MAD MONK"
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